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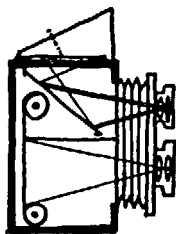
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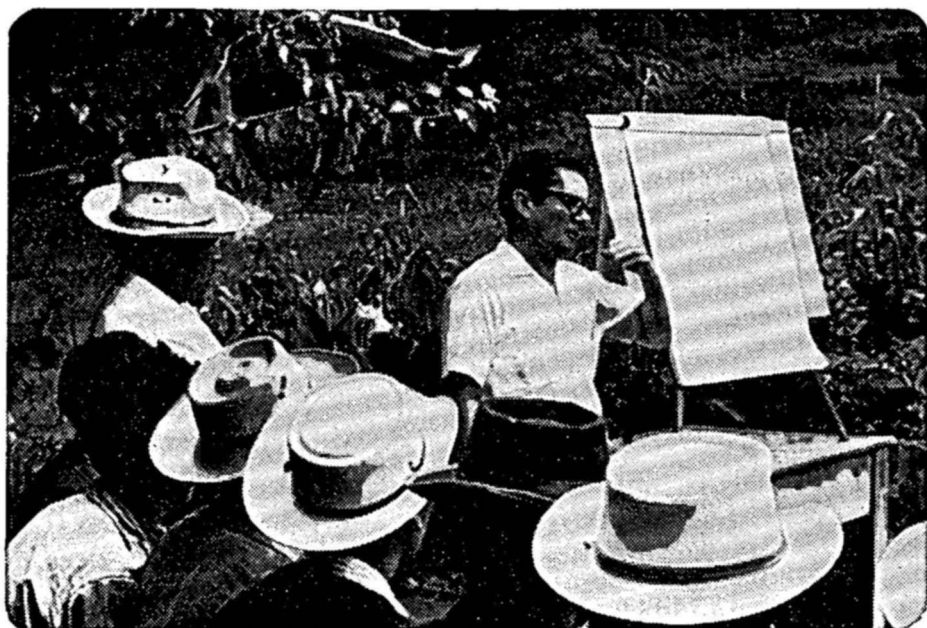
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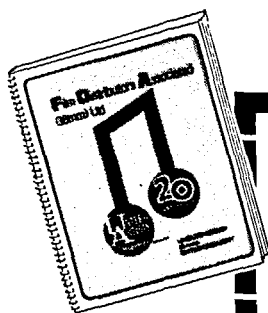
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Foreword

In this double issue, we are printing a major article on Budd Boetticher by his friend Christopher Wicking, who has known him for some years. We are also printing two of Christopher Wicking's interviews with directors of Westerns: the first, with Anthony Mann and the second, with Delmer Daves. In later issues we have been promised further articles and interviews on the Western by him, which were to have provided the foundation for a book on the subject.

The interview with Jack Gold continues the series which David Spiers is organizing on production in Great Britain. *Screen 6* will concentrate on British Cinema and Television. We shall be printing a contribution from Milton Subotsky, the film producer, as well as an interview with James Cellan Jones, the television director. An article on Film Availability and film hire by Susan Macdonald, which describes some of the main problems for educationalists in this country, will also appear.

In this issue, we reprint two articles on film teaching, by Daniel Millar and George Robertson. The article by Daniel Millar is especially interesting. In a later issue, a further comment by two Committee members of SEFT will be printed, as well as a discussion on some possible ways of devising courses for film teaching.

This issue also concludes two sets of articles, those on the films of Arthur Penn and the reprinted articles on William Friese Greene.

K.G.-Y.
T.B.

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1969-1970

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Budd Boetticher

Christopher Wicking

On 5 May 1958, Budd Boetticher embarked on a Herculean project, a 'documentary' about the great Mexican matador Carlos Arruza. Boetticher had: 'got tired of all the crap that's been written about the bulls, and decided to photograph the truth.' He had been a bullfighter himself – though never more than a 'nobody spelled with a capital NO.' His career as a director is irrevocably fused with the bullfight – his first Hollywood job was technical adviser and coach to Tyrone Power on Mamoulian's *Blood and Sand* (1941). The semi-autobiographical *Bullfighter and the Lady* (*Torero*), his eleventh film, gave him his first real success in 1951. Having completed a series of action movies for Universal, he was back with *Magnificent Matador* (1955). In 1960 he again went to Mexico to finish *Arruza*. 'Photographing the truth' was effectively to

Christopher

Wicking is a screen writer whose work includes *Scream and Scream Again* and *Travelling People*



Boetticher and Scott
whilst making
Comanche Station

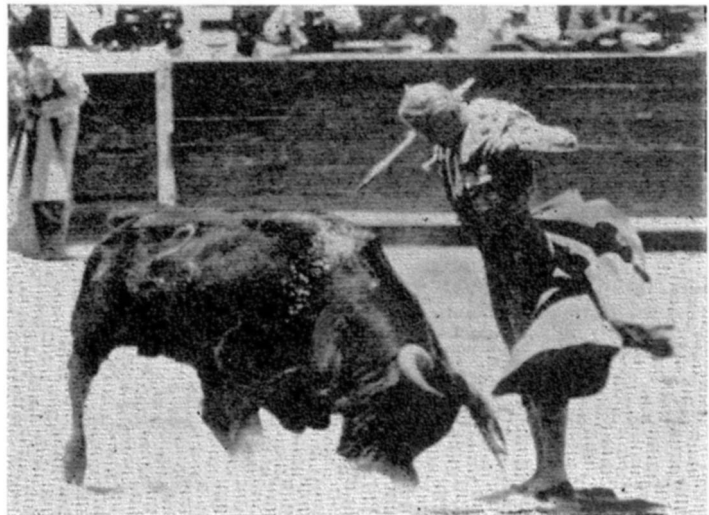
force him to give up his Hollywood career and literally gamble his life on the project for a full eight years.

A strike in the Mexican industry forced a halt in production; his marriage to Debra Paget fell apart because: 'she had contractual commitments in Europe and I had to stay in Mexico'; gradually, all Boetticher's money was absorbed by the film; he was thrown into an asylum by his business manager who believed seriously that this was the way to get Boetticher back to the 'sanity' of eighteen-day Westerns; he spent time in the Federal prison; almost died, then nearly lost a lung, through 'Walking' or 'galloping pneumonia', where 'the lungs fill up with jelly over a period of months and strangle you to death.'¹ Bullfighting 'saved' him, for, by performing 'veronicas,' the exertion forced him to cough and up came the jelly. After two nights of this, a third of the lung was clear. As a final blow, Arruza died in a car crash two years before the picture was ultimately finished.

Through all this, and a succession of comparatively minor crises and frustrations, Boetticher held to his vision: 'Are you going to destroy yourself, or are you going to hold on and let everybody else quit? Eventually you win.'²

Such personal commitment is almost unique in a Hollywood director and is a keynote to an understanding of Boetticher's work. Using Andrew Sarris's schematic distinctions (*Film Culture* Spring 1963), Ford's heroes are sustained by tradition, Hawks's by professionalism, Walsh's by their feeling for

The Bullfighter and the Lady





His career . . . is
irrevocably fused with
the bullfight

adventure. All three directors lie at the roots of American cinema and American consciousness, and though Boetticher shares an instinctive life-style and approach with them (as well as with Wellman, Mann, etc.), in a real sense he shares little. Instead his world lies somewhere between those of Hemingway and Mailer in the overall search for 'meaningful personal action.' But, where Hemingway's context sprang from an earlier society, and Mailer's torment comes from working within society now, Boetticher 'disposes' of society: his characters largely invent their own. The matador in the arena, the Westerner in the big empty, are sustained by nothing more or less than a sense of *themselves*, existing within the tension between 'I am' and 'I do,' holding on to this conception to retain meaning and purpose. By removing all social associations, Boetticher lets loose his people in a universe that exists only as part of this conception of self, a stark, hostile world of challenge, conflict, survival, and whatever's beyond.

Boetticher's characters have no sense of 'tradition,' and aren't always professionals. They are men in *motion* as opposed to men of *action*. In the desertscapes or city streets, the patterns, shapes, movement of the bullfight hover – not as allusions, not as conscious points of reference, but as part of an instinctive intelligence. His bullfight films are obviously his most personal, in the sense that they draw from own-lived experience. He is consciously attempting to show certain things. But aside from these, his chosen framework is that of the Western which, as a ritual, is analogous to the

bullfight. Robert Warshow realized that the Western 'is an art form for connoisseurs, where the spectator derives his pleasure from the appreciation of minor variations within the working out of a pre-established order.'³ In speaking of the bullfight, Kenneth Tynan says: '... the end is fixed and only the path to it unknown, and, in consequence, art is within the frontiers of possibility.'⁴ The two forms would seem to be related, when the Western 'is transformed from within by the personality of the artist, his way of looking at and feeling things.'⁵

Boetticher's first Western, *Cimarron Kid* (1951), was the first of his Universal series. Four more were Westerns (and a sixth was a modern rodeo subject, *Bronco Busters*). They have tortuous plots and it is difficult for Boetticher to move in them. But many of their details, some of their passages, a predominant point of view are distinctively his and point forward. In particular, *Seminole* (1953) is impressive as, to a lesser degree, are *Wings of the Hawk* (1953) and *Horizons West* (1952). The narrative of *Seminole* is beautifully conceived and told, with a minimum of dialogue into which meaning has been telescoped. The developing conflict between military duty and personal values arises naturally out of character and situation, and there is a fine visual sense at work. The action is enclosed within a triangle – the fort, a trading post and an Indian village in the Everglades. The characters travel from point to point to bluff, parley, trade and doublecross in the manner, if not the style, of later Boetticher. Words are of little use whether in the swamps (an excellent expeditionary sequence has to be conducted under orders of silence), or in a court martial where there is no literal evidence. *Wings of the Hawk* shows Boetticher's growing preoccupation with Mexico. It is far more interesting for its texture and details than for its narrative, as is *Horizons West*, with its community of deserters, outcasts, outlaws and civil war veterans existing in a self-perpetuating transit camp, and the scenes in the Mexican Zona Libre, an equivalent situation. The ecomaniac Rudolfo Acosta who rules this free state has a specially designed uniform ('Maybe I'll make one for you,' he offers a henchman, 'but without the hat!') He takes a percentage of the sales of stolen goods; is worried about the men he has to feed and clothe, and makes calculations in either dollars or pesos with whirlwind speed. Touches like this, the kind of loyalty the characters inspire (minor henchmen insist their leader Robert Ryan be addressed as 'Major' at all times), the texture and attitudes that

creep through make this and the other films of iconographic interest. Even though they are better than the majority of Universal's Westerns of the time, they do not compare favourably with Anthony Mann's prestigious series, or Fregonese's *Apache Drums* (and possibly his *Saddle Tramp*).

It wasn't until 1956 that Boetticher found a framework where his skills could shine successfully. This was in *7 Men From Now*, one of Randolph Scott's starring Westerns for Warners, produced by John Wayne's Batjac company with whom Boetticher had made *Bullfighter and the Lady*. Its success led to six more Scott Westerns, five of them for Scott's production company with Harry Joe Brown, four of them with writer Burt Kennedy. *7 Men*, *Tall T*, *Decision at Sundown*, *Buchanan Rides Alone*, *Comanche Station* (all save *Westbound*) together with *Rise and Fall of Legs Diamond* (1960), the last film Boetticher made before departing for Mexico, formed the basis for his reputation. But now we have *Arruza* and his latest Western *A Time for Dying*.

The earlier Scott-Brown Westerns reveal a surprisingly consistent attitude. Andre de Toth's *Bounty Hunter* (1954) has a strange silent opening over burning rocks, with Scott stalking his prey, that is a kind of precursor of Boetticher's *Ride Lonesome* and *Comanche Station*. De Toth's *Man in the Saddle* (1952) and Gordon Douglas's *The Nevadan* (1949) have elements of bluff and deception, of long journeyings and repeated variations of action, that indicate that the Scott-Brown partnership knew, just as much as Boetticher, the kind of thing they wanted. But none of the pre-Boetticher pictures (with the exception of Joseph H. Lewis's uniquely personal films) have been unified, whether structurally or thematically. They are genre movies, and have not been 'transformed from within.' Boetticher's achieved this. It is Scott-Brown's achievement that they saw the value of letting him.

There seems a close relationship between these Westerns and certain bullfight concepts – the idea of 'terrain,' for instance, the way the Scott character chooses the ground where he'll fight in the climaxes of *7 Men From Now* and *Ride Lonesome*, but fights in the heart of enemy country in *Buchanan Rides Alone*, *Decision at Sundown*. There are elements of 'contest' running through the pictures: the *7 Men From Now* climax with the hero and the stolen Wells Fargo box out in the open, the villains planning how to get it: 'We'll circle round, come at him from both sides,' and a gradual

chipping away of these enemies until the last remaining protagonist steps into the arena and the hero emerges from the rocks. *Buchanan Rides Alone* is even more geometric with the moneybags on the little bridge, the two warring factions on either side trying to get the hapless heavies to bring it back to them. This, the twisting, turning variation that precedes it, the isolated blasts of action such as Scott fighting the Indians with a saddle in *Comanche Station*, all relate to *la lidia*. Boetticher's feeling for unity, of formal structure, and 'frameworks,' becomes a way of showing. In the bullfight scenes of *Magnificent Matador* and the Plaza Mexico finale of *Arruza*, Boetticher's images seem simple and effortless. Through the fusion of his camera eye, and his knowledge of form and pattern, Boetticher is able to *show*, emotionally, just what the bullfight is about, to make us 'see' the essence of Arruza. In the Westerns, by creating an equally hermetic world, by choosing and selecting themes, forms and patterns, he comes to understand those worlds as well as he does the bullfight, and can show and make us 'see' in an equivalent manner.

Boetticher's style is spare, cerebral, operating on a certain plane of detachment, engaging our sympathies through what we experience of the film. If we admire, respect, understand the characters, we don't do it automatically (the way we do with, say, Steve McQueen in *Magnificent 7*). Boetticher seems most to resemble Keaton, the master director, who instinctively understood the fusion that must exist between the action, the movement, the gag and the camera. The majority of his jokes are made not by their inherent comic value but by *how* the camera sees them. His films are brilliant not because he was a supremely funny man, but because he was a supremely gifted director. Boetticher's formal instinct in these areas enables him to use the medium in a similarly purposeful (yet entirely unselfconscious) manner. The way we 'see' Arruza – the way we understand – is the way we 'see' Boetticher's best work.

Boetticher's characters appear out of their landscape, to journey through an almost abstract limbo where we *hear* all about the world at large but never see it. The westerns are full of references to other places – the Greers in *Seven Men From Now* are travelling between Silver Springs and Flora Vista in Arizona, having come from Kansas City on their way to California. The people at the way station have all left because of Indian scares. Where have they gone? 'Maybe north. Or they could've gone west.' One of the

few personal conversations takes place when Masters (Lee Marvin) steadfastly maintains that he wasn't *born* in Silver Springs, he was just 'brung there young.' He takes great pains to point this out, as though being born somewhere identifiable would cause disgrace. (He never does say where he *was* born.) In *Tall T*, Pat Brennan (Randolph Scott), has a small ranch 'on the Sassafree,' goes to a near-by town called Contention, whose stage route runs to Bisbee, where 'the railroad's layin' tracks faster'n a nervous hen.' Frank Usher (Richard Boone) comes from Wyoming. Chink and Billy Jack (Henry Silva and Skip Homeir) spend a long scene talking about the joys of the women in Sonora Town. ('I was there once' 'Only *once*?') From Val Verde to Casa Verde, Santa Cruz to Lordsburg, Bisbee to Silver Springs, Silver City to Vinegaroon, the characters are always journeying – though we rarely ever see them leave where they've come from, and hardly ever do they get where they say they're going.

It's a world in flux. Travelling, motion, seem a condition of being, an emotional necessity. Boetticher himself looked forward to the day when: 'We'll travel all over, making our films wherever the action's really set – East Germany, India, Russia, Mexico, Red China. We won't belong to any one country, we won't have any home, we'll live wherever we're making our films.' And, for Arruza: 'the delight is in the journey, not in the ending of it.' (This may be a reason why Boetticher likes to end his films very quickly.)

The characters converge, make their way across desolate landscapes, or stopover in hostile towns, anticipating sudden violence and even utter destruction with humour, grace and personal courage, driven by almost mystical moral compulsions. There is no home, few friends, and love has often frozen in the abstract. Even so, such 'love' can give a reason for living, can sometimes define it wholly, even though the love-person is dead. The recurring theme in the Randolph Scott Westerns is that of the dead, or abused, wife. Boetticher says: 'To me, the destruction of the person you love is much more unbearable than anything that can happen to you. I don't care how big, how tough, how successful you are – you must love somebody to stay that way. If that somebody is suddenly taken away – it takes one hell of a man or woman to keep going.'⁶

Love makes Jeff Cody search ten years for his Indian-captive wife in *Comanche Station*. It is love for a now-dead wife that

drives the heroes of *7 Men From Now*, *Ride Lonesome* and *Decision at Sundown*, but now the love has hardened into a proportionately monumental desire for revenge. *The Killer is Loose* explicitly to avenge the death of *his* wife, killed for a change by the goodguy ('cop' Joseph Cotten). It is the lack of love within him, and the withering of the love of his wife that destroys Legs Diamond. 'Love' in such contexts is part of the conception of identity. The women that take part in the journey-westerns are symbols of all the things the characters want – sex, love, home, peace. The only character in a Boetticher picture who has been able to relate these concepts to his 'life purest' is Arruza, who is hardly a 'character' as such. Interestingly, Arruza's wife, like John Wayne, merely 'reacts.' As Peter Coonradt says in *Cinema*: 'she exists simply as his greatest admirer.' For a matador, the women can cause more damage than the bulls. Sex, love and war was one of Hemingway's most tortuous fusions. Hawks's women have to become male counterparts in order to emerge in the action. Ford's women stay safe on the ranch or in the fort while the men ride away to 'do what they have to do.' These aren't hangups for Boetticher. There's always a woman around for the travelling (except for *Buchanan*) and she might get chunked out of danger into a horse trough when the Indians attack, like Nancy Gates in *Comanche Station*, or she might, like Karen Steele, be handy with a rifle in *Ride Lonesome* and take her one-armed man's part by slamming a right-cross on one of the *Westbound* heavies. Certainly, she'll 'move like she's alive all over.' And in his most recent work, the screenplay of *Two Mules for Sister Sara** and *A Time for Dying*, the core has the developing relationship between a man and a woman, who come closer than other couples in any of his pictures. But, counterpointing the beauty of their temporal relationships, there is an ultimate ironic aridity in the final analysis. *Two Mules* ends in bitterness and disgust; *A Time for Dying* in the death of its hero, leaving behind a wife he has hardly come to know. Her situation, totally alone in an alien world, is incredibly bleak and moving, especially as the death is so hopelessly cruel. There will probably never be any satisfactory resolution to the conflicting drives of a man's necessity and a woman's – except the conventional 'happy end' solution which even Hawks is content with, but which Boetticher has never tolerated.

* *Two Mules for Sister Sara* is being directed by Don Siegal, not Boetticher. This has resulted in a court battle that Boetticher is fighting. His friend, Siegal, is an innocent party, however.

Though his films often have tragic themes and resonances, Boetticher holds them at bay, prevents them from looming overtly 'serious' by his wit and irony. *Buchanan Rides Alone* and *Rise and Fall of Legs Diamond* in particular revolve round a comic axis even though they are essentially, integrally 'serious,' and the wild and often disenchanted comedy allows us fresh, mordant insights into familiar worlds. Boetticher will also turn to comedy to strike sparks off situations that wouldn't otherwise be possible – the *Legs Diamond* climax finds us laughing in empathy at Legs's claims of immortality (he's been a two-gun twirling character like Lee Marvin in *7 Men*) – and then the laughter sticks in the throat. Legs is suddenly, really dead. This is similar to the climax of *Time for Dying* – packed with laughs which are choked off by the sudden death of the hero. It is made more shocking, painful, moving and wasteful by the comic dimension. And through all the Westerns there runs a vein of gritty laconic humour. For the characters, it is protection, defence, definition, and an awareness of mortality.

The death of the bull is a fundamental element of the bullfight, just as death is a fundamental element of any Western, for as Robert Ardrey points out in *African Genesis*: 'it's the blazing six-shooter the audience wants to see and they won't be cheated of it.' Ardrey feels that: 'Hollywood knows more about the inner nature of homo sapiens, viewed as a species, than any political, philosophical or scientific school on Earth.' For Boetticher then, 'ex-matador, Hollywood director and master of the Western' (as the NFT's poster billed him), it would be impossible to 'escape' death in his pictures. Death is most dominant in *The Fleet that Came to Stay*, one of the remarkable pictures he made while serving with the US Navy. Apart from an opening studio sequence, it was 'compiled' from newsreel footage. Even here Boetticher's individuality emerges.

The fleet is heading off across the lonesome ocean at night; the camera is prowling around the decks of the ships, eavesdropping on the sailors who are shrouded in shadows, highlighted by the moon. The men talk of where they're going; what they will have to do there, so many miles away from home; what will confront them once they arrive. (A scene amazingly close to those in the Scott Westerns a decade later, when the characters use what tranquil respite there is to talk of their dubious pasts and hypothetical futures.) For once in Boetticher, we get the sense of a *mass* of individuals. Their destination proves to be Okinawa; their mission to

park off the island to maintain a supply service that bridges the Pacific for the forces fighting inland. The fleet *has* to stay. And then comes the enemy: 'Diving out of the dawn' – 'the might of the Imperial Japanese Air Force' – the kamikazi, suicide planes. By day and by night and by day again, in a sequence unparalleled in any motion picture, the kamikazi literally hurl themselves at the American fleet, who try to ward off the incredible attack. It's made plain that the Japanese, often no more than sixteen-year-olds, knew when they climbed into the planes that they would never come back. The men and their explosive-packed machines become a frightening, corporate weapon – hurtling down to cause as much damage as they can; or, in futility, to wind up in the sea like 'spent darts.' For the rest of the film, it's these 'men who want to die' versus 'the men who fight to live.' Altogether 4,232 were shot down.

The film's attitude to this almost surreal spectacle is uncompromisingly Boetticher's. On the US ships we see a bomb come loose from a landing plane, skittering across the deck while the men flee in panic; the next shot is of a dead or dying man being carried on a stretcher. A plane fails to take off, catches fire and its pilot is burning alive. There is no propaganda (in the manner of Ford's folksy *December 7th*), no condemnation of the enemy. To them is extended an awesome *respect*. Instead of judgement, we watch an utterly formal duel. It becomes a conflict fought in a weird private arena *within* the world of war: 'The suicide planes are lonely and individual as faces, macabre as hearses, cryptic as death itself. Both the intrepidity of reason and the intrepidity of whatever the Japanese use in its place, are caught here in a relationship beyond all logic. It is an immemorially primitive nightmare in extremely modern dress; a dance of death.'⁷

'These films were made during the war for our country and we don't take screen credit for them,' says Boetticher. Nevertheless the result is resolutely personal: 'All of us connected with it nearly ended our brief careers right there.'

But an explosion of violence, death on this scale is an aberration for Boetticher. The regard he feels for his characters is sometimes evidenced by the unique deaths he invents for them. It is an extension of the philosophy of dignity expressed in *Magnificent Matador* perhaps – 'It is better to die on the horns than live in disgrace' – but also an attempt to transcend the Hollywood framework. Most striking,



visually, is John Larch's death in *Killer is Loose* – he is shot while holding a bottle of milk, the bullet smashing through it on its way to his flesh. The splattering liquid becomes an audacious synonym for his blood. Other deaths are memorable – Usher in *Tall T*, blasted in the face, staggering round the camp, into and out of the hut where his two young guns lie dead, screaming an ambiguous 'Brennan!' before collapsing in a heap with the burlap sheet over his bloodied face; Dobie in *Comanche Station* – who can't go ahead and 'do' Mr. Cody and is shot in the back by Ben Lane as he rides away. He plainly finds it hard to kill him but cannot do anything else. Dobie falls, gets his foot caught in the stirrup and is dragged a long way over the crests and hillocks of the 'big empty.' His death has warned Cody of the danger from Lane – and as Cody rushes to stop the careering horse and bends over Dobie's contorted body, we have an ironic reminder of Cody's offer of kindness to him earlier on – 'when we get to Lordsburg you can ride away with me,' a gesture to help Dobie across the line from outlawry. The death of Masters in *7 Men From Now* – beaten to the draw, the baffled expression as he looks down at his hands, empty for the only time in his life, then falling down across the Fargo box, gripping the lock in death, which is made even more affecting by the victor, Stride (Scott), limping over to sit down exhausted on a large boulder. Destined for memory is Cass's nightmarish death in *Time for Dying* – which has echoes of one of the most deeply moving of all, that of Rod

John Larch,
Wendell Corey and
Boetticher on
Killer is Loose

Miller (Michael Dante) in *Westbound*. Miller, the one-armed ex-soldier, has been self-pitying complaining about his disability, his inability to use a weapon. John Hayes (Scott), without once saying it in words, *shows* him how to pump a rifle with one hand. Delighted, Miller succeeds in mastering this and goes out of the door to tend the stock – his manhood somehow confirmed again. As he gets outside an astonishingly abrupt shotgun blast blows him back in. We have been totally unprepared for anything so sudden. At this point Miller is only wounded. Later Hayes returns and as he walks to the house, the door opens and Miller's wife (Karen Steele) comes out on to the porch. The camera is at a high angle looking down – and suddenly, they both freeze, to stare, immobile at each other. We don't need to be told Miller is dead; it's a subtle way of communicating it and one of Boetticher's most beautiful touches.

Moments like this occur often, their fragility amidst the barrenness around makes them doubly moving, like the little yellow wildflower Cass hands Nellie in *Time for Dying*. Apart from his name, it's all he has to give her. Cody's generosity of spirit to Dobie in *Comanche Station* ('You can ride away with me') is similarly an offer of one of the few things he has to share with anybody, his company. There is a many-levelled scene in *7 Men From Now* when Masters is drawing allusions to the growing relationship between Stride and Mrs. Greer (and thereby taunting her husband) by quoting a doubtless fictitious story about just such a relationship, while Masters pays Mrs. Greer the most eloquent compliments his limited vocabulary can conjure. Similar passages of tranquillity in other pictures are one of the strengths of Burt Kennedy's writing. The words he gives to his characters are spare, chipped letter by letter out of the needs these loners feel. The little epilogue to *Comanche Station* – the discovery of the blind husband and Cody's weary grin as he rides away to his solitude is another moment of great sensitivity.

These elements – the mobile, the comic, the violent and the sensitive – are expertly interwoven in Boetticher's work. A set of tensions is created between them as first one then another element temporarily dominates. The pattern forms and reforms, layer upon layer of understanding is built up, making for eternal surprise, revelation and resolution. When the pattern is unified – often the films go round in a kind of circle – and complete the story is over. 'At what point, I wonder, does the art that conceals art become the art that

reveals art?’ wonders Kenneth Tynan in *Bull Fever*. He decides ‘at the point when pride supersedes integrity.’

‘The characters are more important to me than the ideas,’ says Boetticher, ‘because it’s through the mind and the sayings and the actions of the characters that the ideas are born. I’m not concerned with what people stand for, I’m concerned with what they do about it.’ What Legs Diamond ‘does’ in *The Rise and Fall of Legs Diamond* is physically more than any other Boetticher character – and through the course of the picture we see most clearly that Boetticher’s films are songs of symmetry, geometrics, logic, *motion*. From his first day dodging traffic to his last day daring death, Legs’s world is one of movement fused by the camera choreography, full of incursive angels and sharp planes, of sepulchral blacks and rich daunting whites, a helter-skelter fashioned into something meticulous, exhilarating and deadly funny.

Legs hardly ever *walks* – he seems propelled. His agility, his catlike movements, his sheer physical charm impress. As a cover for his first crime, he takes Karen Steele dancing. All through the picture Legs is on the move – climbing in and out of skylights, going up in dumb waiters, jumping through windows and leaping across balconies. Such sudden appearances, this ability to pop up and get the drop on his rivals, the imaginative way he *uses* movement is in no small degree the secret of his rise. All this is kept at a distance, and Legs isn’t some latter-day Fairbairns.

But Legs is a hollow shell, his emotions are still-born. He can never see beyond his immediate horizon, is moving so much that he can’t see anything. In a masterfully comic sequence it takes him a tour of Europe and a succession of movie newsreels (Legs, for once, having to sit still and *look*) for him to realize what’s going on back home – specifically that he’s being frozen out, the concrete jungle has become the boardroom jungle. Legs starts to fall, and only his megalomaniacal sense of invincibility makes him hang on. When two hoods burst in to kill him, one of them flees, terrified by the bizarre spectacle of a man who believes himself immortal. But the belief is absurd – Legs dies even while screaming ‘the bullet hasn’t been made that can kill me.’

And once dead, the image that registers the incontrovertible fact (for Legs has been close to dying before) is when he is

Ray Danton as Legs Diamond. 'His agility, his catlike movements ...'



being *carried* on a stretcher to the ambulance. Being dead for Legs is not being able to *move*. Just as his inability to *be* moved emotionally has meant that, as a human being, Legs has always been dead. With Corman's *Machine Gun Kelly* (1958) and Siegel's *Babyface Nelson* (1957), Boetticher has made one of the few distinctly unique post-war gangster movies. But again, next to Corman's weird Freudian hero and his tougher, stronger, more sadistic girl-friend, and Siegel's runty little Napoleon-tainted animal, *Legs* is far more deadly, far more sophisticated, far more disturbingly ambiguous. *Legs* stands alone.

Legs Diamond's character is a blending of what in the Scott Westerns are two characters, nominally hero and villain, who exist not so much as opposites but as complements. As in life, Boetticher is determined not to take the easy way, so his murderous outlaws are generally far more charming,

sympathetic and attractive than the heroes who are stoical, taciturn, self-absorbed, often with emotion-blocked horizons. Boetticher never attempts to condemn or excuse the one, or evoke immediate sympathy for the other. We have to watch, and come to conclusions based on what we see and learn, not on preconceptions of Hollywood cinema.

In many respects, the only other American director who comes at all close to matching these attitudes is Anthony Mann (though some of Nicholas Ray's pictures are built around the imperfections of their heroes). The Mann-made films with James Stewart exceed the Scott characterizations for 'selfishness' and singleminded determination at the outset, but are made far more overtly viable by Stewart's bubbling, trembling emotion. But his intense individualism gradually becomes tempered: he invariably winds up having 'learned' other virtues. Mann also has an inherent belief in society, and a graphic detailed environment (which often develops as we experience the picture, and is important as a context for his heroes' actions). Consequently, the Mann hero's private drama invariably culminates in a public catharsis and the anti-social outcast is integrated. Similar ideas of 'regeneration' permeate Delmer Daves's Westerns, while Hawks's people, although freed from graphic tensions have absolute need of a 'group' context within a generalized social framework. Boetticher persists in solitude. The hero of *Ride Lonesome*, Ben Brigade (Scott), finally satisfies his desire for revenge, but there is no sense of traditional triumph. Instead, Boetticher confronts us with the spectacle of the mute, enigmatic hero, standing by the blazing, hanging tree, the symbol of the fires that consumed him which are now burnt out. He has won – but has nothing to put in place of what he has lost, though his gesture in handing Billy John to Boone contains hope for Brigade as a human being. *Comanche Station* has Jeff Cody searching for his Indian-captive wife, packing up trade goods every time he hears of a white woman up for sale, riding out across the wasteland to 'buy' her in the hope that it is his wife. In the action of the film he doesn't find her – and the last shot finds him riding back across the rocks where we first discovered him. It is both stoic and lyrical.

But the most extreme examples of Boetticher's anti-heroes and anti-villains are Bart Allison (Scott) and Tate Kimbrough (John Carroll) in *Decision at Sundown*. Allison rides into Sundown with his friend Sam (Noah Beery jr.), the only friend the Scott character enters with in the whole series.

Allison is there to kill Kimbrough to avenge the death of his wife, and his obsession blinds him to all other considerations. Kimbrough is a charming cynic who has the whole town in the palm of his hand and intends to fight to keep his authority intact. Allison moves step by step closer to him, but is a catalyst-figure who shows the townspeople just how they've sold themselves out, so, just as surely, Kimbrough's crown starts to slip. By the time they step out to face each other, Allison's gunhand has been smashed; Sam has been shot in the back, and the truth that Allison's wife was no more than a whore is inescapable; while Kimbrough knows that his reign in Sundown is over. He faces Allison with dignity – only to be shot in the leg by his mistress (Valerie French) to prevent Allison killing him. So, in an astonishing volte-face, nobody dies, and Kimbrough rides away safe, having lost the town, but taking with him more than Allison is left with. He gets morosely drunk, smashes the saloon mirror, and defiantly rides away to his darkness. His universe has been shot through, his self-justification exploded in a wholly uncompromising way. The viewpoint here is honest and bleak, but the film is regarded as one of the weakest in the series. This is surely because Boetticher's totally ruthless approach has left no room for his characteristic humour. There are hardly any laughs in *Sundown*.

Kimbrough, along with Boone (Pernell Roberts) and Wid (James Coburn) in *Ride Lonesome* are Boetticher's least deadly anti-villains, and all of them ride away with more than the Scott character. But none of the complementary characters in the other films matches Usher in *Tall T*, beautifully played by Richard Boone, and a natural development of the more picaresque and flamboyant Masters played with relish by Lee Marvin in *7 Men From Now*. Usher is as lonely as Brennan (Scott), their differences almost solely moral ones, to do with their conceptions of identity. *Tall T*, like Delmer Daves's *3.10 to Yuma*, sprang from an Elmore Leonard story. Both films involve goodguy and badguy sealed up together. In *Tall T* Brennan is kept captive by Usher; in *Yuma*, Ben Wade (Glenn Ford) is held captive by Dan Evans (Van Heflin), while waiting for the train that will take Wade to Yuma penitentiary and for Wade's gang that will attempt to spring him free. Initially, Evans is the weak-willed failure, who needs to prove himself to get his family's respect. From the outset, Wade is the more sympathetic. In *Tall T*, Brennan is his own man, has no need to prove himself, and, though he is a little stupid

(attempting to ride a seed bull in a bet that we feel he knows he'll lose, as he does), we respect him, as we do Usher. Indeed, it is the mutual respect that they feel which forms the basis of their uneasy-truce friendship. We are never led to 'admire' Usher, in the way we are with Wade. Wade has the masculine virtues, and all the charm. Evans does not admire or respect him as much as envy him his personality. We take Wade's point of view, as he comes to respect Evans, until in the climax he arbitrarily helps him succeed against his own gang who are trying to rescue him. Daves is manipulating our feelings, and indeed manipulating his narrative. *Tall T* concludes as it has been running. Brennan has destroyed Usher's two young guns and waits for Usher in the camp. Usher turns his back on Brennan, gambling that he won't be able to shoot him in the back. Brennan can't, and Usher rides clear. It is Usher's own decision to go back and try for the money. Within seconds he both gives himself life and commits suicide. Boetticher allows him to retain his essential dignity in a way he denies Allison in *Decision at Sundown*. So Wade in *Yuma* is in the good old good-bad guy tradition, with 'heroic' qualities which he uses for the 'right' reasons in the climax. Usher is in a unique category, he has his own particular kind of heroism, his own particular kind of 'right.' An Anthony Mann character comes closest to Boetticher's anti-villains – Mr. Gannon (John McIntyre) in *Far Country*. But Gannon is less complete than a Boetticher character. Mann cannot develop the logic of the situation. Gannon winds up cheating in the climax, Webster (James Stewart) more or less triumphs for the social good. No Boetticher hero does that; no anti-villain ever cheats in the showdown: 'I couldn't enjoy spending all the money if I'd done you that way,' they'll explain when the Scott character wonders why they don't just 'plug' him in the back.

Elsewhere, Boetticher distinguishes between various kinds of 'badness' in a way that enriches the texture of his pictures, and confers on all his characters an honesty, a sense of individuality, a uniqueness: the fine moral distinctions between Clay Putnam (Andrew Duggan) and Mace (Michael Pate) in *Westbound*; the way mean and nasty Swede Hanson (Andrew Duggan), who has backshot Sam in *Sundown*, nevertheless sweeps off his hat and coat in order to face up to Allison with courage; the way Billy John (James Best), the young murderer in *Ride Lonesome*, warns Carrie (Karen Steele) not to look at the scalped bodies in the coach; the fine degree of gradation between the trios of outcasts in

Comanche Station and *Tall T*. Even the dying station man (Rand Brooks) in *Comanche Station*, holds on to the desire to look after his horses, his last thought being for his job. It is this kind of distinctively individual character that makes *Buchanan Rides Alone* work so well – the malevolent Agrys, their henchmen and Carbo are all uniquely and individually rotten, and the savage Jonsonesque comedy sets off their respective greed, lies, deception, stupidity, treachery and ruthlessness in wickedly funny counterpoint to the loney virtues of the few decent people in Agry Town. Though the basic plot, and a couple of scenes, are taken directly from the Jonas Ward novel – *The Name's Buchanan* – the characters, the structure and the whole mordant viewpoint are completely Boetticher's. *Buchanan* perhaps compensates for *Decision at Sundown*. Basic patterns are the same, but Boetticher's distinctive attitudes and style are in harmony with his almost perverse sense of humour in a way that was not so in *Sundown*. If this is society, we can understand why Boetticher's people prefer their solitary wilderness.

All these pictures were made in five years of concentrated creativity. Boetticher essentially wrote them, or worked closely with his writers, and then drew on his improvisational, instinctive feeling for the medium. He and Burt Kennedy were considering *Ride the High Country*/*Guns in the Afternoon*, but *Arruza* prevented Boetticher's involvement with it. Sardonicly, Boetticher says that the script he saw was 'essentially the same' as the film turned out – but he and Kennedy would have had a few changes to make. That Boetticher would have become a 'casualty' of the panic that Hollywood found itself in with the death of the middle budget film (like Mann, Sturges, Nick Ray and others) is unlikely given his character – even though Boetticher washed himself up in many minds through his persistence in battling with *Arruza*. Ten years later, it appears that Hollywood has changed. For Boetticher, the Mexican years were ones of self-discovery and personal enlightenment. He started really to write for the first time (three screenplays and a kind of cathartic 'autobiographical novel,' *When in Disgrace*), and in his 'dark night of the soul' Boetticher found a great deal more of value than he might in any other situation. 'Eventually you win.' Two of his victories are *Arruza* and *A Time for Dying* which make it clear that the Mexican years have left Boetticher more uncompromising than ever.

'*Arruza* is a strange picture where you can see that I just

said "If you don't like it – tough titty!" It was made for Carlos, me, and the true aficionados – no one else. But any motion picture buff has to love it – it's really real . . . Carlos fought until 1953 and then retired from formal bullfighting. He returned to the Plazas to appear on horseback (Portuguese style) and that is the story of my picture.'

Arruza is essentially an experience, a deeply loving film, whose sole purpose is to communicate the essence of its star, its pivot, its *raison d'être*. No doubt, too, there was a sense of rivalry between the two men ('directors are prima donnas like 'toreros'), with Boetticher competing with his friend across the bridge between their two worlds. The film opens with a succession of rapid zoom-ins on the statues of the matador and bull that circle Plaza Mexico – and we return here for the final shot, now that Arruza has taken his place with the other immortals, frozen in art and time. This visual unity encompasses a film of utter simplicity. Its cerebral quality admirably captures the emotion and dynamism of the images ('When the fighter is at his coolest, the emotion is often at its height,' says Tynan. 'The fight is a romantic spectacle, but its practice is a science.')

Boetticher's dramatic sense gradually draws us into Arruza's world; the *tienta* sequence testing the cows acquaints us with the grace and beauty of the work with the capes; a succeeding sequence shows us Arruza learning to fight *rejoneo*, on horseback; and by the time we are at Nogales for Arruza's debut as a *rejoneador*, we know what Arruza is going to do. But we do not know, nor does he precisely, *how*. 'How' is essentially always different. The first 'how' comes with a gasp as 'the enemy' bursts in, 'half a ton of fury born to kill or be killed.' A long, subtle montage sequence blends together various *corridos*, bulls, and triumphs. Arruza retires once more. He goes back to breed bulls, to scare other matadors. But his compulsion, his need to demonstrate 'who' he is, is something you can't retire from. Every time he drives to Mexico City – 'there it stood, Plaza Mexico,' the world's biggest bull ring, where Arruza retired. Arruza slowly circles the empty building in his car, a low wind moans, and a beautifully apt and evocative shot shows us, through pillars and columns, one of the stone bulls peeking through, taunting and defiant. 'How could he have believed there was nothing left to do?' The film is full of such subtle visuals.

Then a closeup of a bright balloon – the camera zooms back

as the balloon passes and reveals the poster advertising Arruza's return—52,000 people will crowd the arena. The question is not whether Arruza will be as good as he once was – but will he be better? Then we're in Arruza's car as it travels with a police escort through the dense crowds into the concrete runways of the bull ring, down into a darkness that is spiritually lonely. Another Boetticher character is about to walk out into his chosen terrain, and go through 'the life purest.' 'It is a well-known aesthetic truth that a man is totally alone at a moment of reckoning, but there is no image that captures this truth more powerfully than this one shot from Arruza.'⁸

Then there's a long, brilliant sequence, ostensibly a *vérité* account of the contest, in reality two fights fused together. Only the occasional cutaway is evidence of the incredible task it must have been to cut this material so that it should seem so simple, effortless, pure, *right*. Boetticher ran the sequence for Arruza:

'We sat ten cushioned seats apart, Carlos a row in front of me in the otherwise empty projection room. From the first view of the stationwagon sequence, Carlos leaned forward to rest his chin against the back of the chair in front of him. Twenty-seven times (I counted them) during the half hour he flinched bolt upright. When the projection room lights flashed on he jumped straight up into the air.

'You are a Goddamned "genio",' he shouted. 'That's better than I *am*!'¹

Boetticher's friendship with Arruza (who never once offered to put money into the picture, and whom Boetticher never once asked), which had become somewhat glacial, burst into warmth again. Both of them had what they wanted from the picture. Three weeks later, Arruza was dead.

Boetticher's now celebrated quote – 'What if the director of *Agony and the Ecstasy* had had Michelangelo instead of Charlton Heston?' – sums up Boetticher's feelings about the picture. 'The years were worth the spending, the film is 'just the way' he wanted, with absolutely no concessions. It is a key film in Boetticher's work.

And so too is *A Time for Dying*, which is as much a product of the years in Mexico as *Arruza*. The screenplay was written in 1965, the year after *Two Mules for Sister Sara*.

Just as that would have been Boetticher's most consummate 'journey' Western, so *Time for Dying* is most closely analogous to *Buchanan* and *Decision at Sundown*. It is at once Boetticher's most subtle and most outrageous film, a weird, hard, cruel and hilarious film, a deeply tender, affecting yet nightmarish film. The deadly humour is twisted to a new point of bitterness, while all the people are more naked, more alone, more in need of relationships. The young hero, Cass Bunning (Richard Lapp), is more vulnerable than any previous Boetticher hero. He eventually dies, not like Legs Diamond because of the lack of love, but because of a lack of hatred. He is a total innocent, who paradoxically knows only about guns. He is lightning fast and frighteningly accurate, but has never drawn on another man. He lacks the killer instinct (or killer necessity) in a world which demands death. Similarly the 'world in flux' is more realistic, more despairing, yet more abstract. Having rescued Nellie (Ann Randall) from the rapacious men of Silver City who think she's the new girl for Mamie's whorehouse (she was, but she didn't know it), she asks where they are. All Cass knows is 'where we ain't.' But there's somewhere, sure, ahead: 'Stagecoach come down this road, it had to come from someplace.' For Cass doesn't know precisely where he is heading anyway. Where other Boetticher heroes are bent on some absolute compulsion, Cass is on an adolescent mission – to turn bounty hunter to get some money to help his dad and their poverty-stricken farm. Like the aspiring *torero*, Cass's gunmanship is the only route open to him for big money. Boetticher, himself, sees it in these terms.

The three 'anti-villains' that Cass and Nellie meet on their dark journey – Billy Pimple (Bob Random), Judge Roy Bean (Victor Jory) and Jesse James (Audie Murphy) – are three of the most intriguing and fascinating Boetticher has ever conjured, conceived in bold strokes and subtle, delicate patterns. They are all indicative of the nihilistic climate of the world that Boetticher has created. Billy is an extension of Cass, several steps ahead of him in the gunmanship stakes, but aware of the threat that Cass represents. They meet in an opening sequence after Cass has killed a rattlesnake that was about to kill a baby rabbit. When Billy asks why, Cass replies: 'A feller should live as long as he can.' 'What about the snake?' asks Billy. Cass instinctively replies that: 'Snakes is different.' 'Is they? Is they?' cries Billy – his hysteria checking Cass. As the picture progresses, it becomes clear that Cass is the rabbit, Billy the snake, and Billy returns, like the

underlying theme he is, for the climax. Cass draws on him, but the guns slip from his grip. Billy plugs him in both shoulders and rides out then hears: 'Snakes is different – snakes is different' echoing in his brain. He can't allow Cass to stay alive, gallops back – like Usher in *Tall T* – and polishes him off. As Billy joins his outriders, he rationalizes his act, realizing that if anybody is to kill him, it'll have to be from the back. He looks behind him, suddenly scared by his own men – and sees only blackness. He makes his outriders move ahead of him – but now his back is completely unprotected. The implicit threat is from the whole world.

Jesse James gives Cass a few lessons in gunfighter psychology, tells him to look him up when his hands don't sweat and he'll give him a job with his highly organized gangs. He admires Cass's abilities, but cannot use his innocence. He plays the part with a kind of wry gentility, like a big brother, in contrast to Billy Pimple, though both are deadly. As is Judge Roy, incarnated by Victor Jory as a demoniacally malignant overlord, but left, as Nellie says 'just an old, old little boy.' There are affinities with Doc Tobin in Mann's *Man of the West* – but Judge Roy is no archaic ghost waiting to die. He's in the middle of his career, and his dangerous senile power will be around historically for some time. But, in Boetticher's conception of all three, there is an all-embracing generosity of spirit that makes them, not simple menace figures, but complex human beings.

The picture ends as another stagecoach pulls into Silver City and another girl arrives for Mamie's whorehouse. Like Nellie, she doesn't appreciate what she's in for. She wiggles pertly up the steps into the building, and gradually all the men in the street follow her. Cass's death is forgotten by all but Nellie, who suddenly realizes she has no idea where Cass's dad lives. She is alone in the hostile world. And as the 'new' Nellie goes into the saloon whorehouse we are looking through the spokes of a wheel and ironic, painful rinkytink saloon music fills the track. It's Boetticher's bleakest, most emotionally authentic, most wasteful ending. The circle is complete – all the snakes have won. The picture – with zooms and slow-motion – is more 'European' in flavour than the earlier Westerns. To appreciate Boetticher's achievement we can take another comparison, with Burt Kennedy's *Support Your Local Sheriff*, a very funny picture, more parody than anything else, but also innocuous,

conventional and 'easy.' Boetticher's ex-writer would appear to have run out of challenges, to have settled for something less than his talent could attain. (One of the most damning criticisms writer Kennedy could hand his characters was 'you've gone gentle.') Boetticher needs tension to function best, and if the world in which he is working continues to 'give up' and let him have his freedom, then he'll just find his own as he did with *Time for Dying*. Part of his compulsion was to make it in seventeen days – if only because the Scott Westerns were made in eighteen. He wanted to see whether, like Arruza, he isn't just as good as he was – but whether he is better.

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Interviews with Anthony Mann

Christopher Wicking and Barrie Pattison

BP: Was *Dr. Broadway* the first time you became involved with a film production unit?

AM: Well I had made a lot of film tests for David Selznick. I made all the tests for *Gone With the Wind*, *Young in Heart*, *Tom Sawyer* and so on, and I was able to cut them as well. When I went to the Coast, I had some knowledge of method and technique.

Then I watched Preston Sturges work on *Sullivan's Travels*. He let me go through the entire production, watching him direct – and I directed a little. I'd stage a scene and he'd tell me how lousy it was. Then I watched the editing and I was able gradually to build up knowledge. Preston insisted I make a film as soon as possible. He said a lot of guys stall, and hesitate and falter, and you may never become a director. And I think he was right. They'll say 'What have you done?' . . . He said it's better to have done something bad than to have done nothing, and this was very sound advice. This was his advice; so the first picture, good or bad, that came along, I decided to do. And this was *Dr. Broadway*.

I think it had some good things in it. I remember very warmly the cameraman, an oldtimer name of Sparkuhl, who had done many films for UFA and Lubitsch, and he was a great help. Nobody else cared a damn about the picture. They said: 'Don't build sets; don't do anything. You have to get finished in 18 days and, if you don't, the cameras are taken from you and OUT.'

BP: You never worked with Theodor Sparkuhl again, did you?

AM: No. I'm sorry to say I didn't. He's dead now of course, but he was really a very fine cameraman and was

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doing nothing at that time so the studio let me have him. He didn't care how many hours I spent at night with him, discussing how to shoot the scene next morning. This was Macdonald Carey's first film too, and you see the problem of a young director? They give you every obstacle in the book. They say: 'Give him fifteen days, give him no actors at all, only people who've never been in front of a camera before; God help him, and let's see what happens.' And that's the way you generally start.

I'll never forget one experience – I was in the middle of shooting a scene out on the backlot of Paramount. This was the first sequence in the picture and I was supposed to have three days out there. And about the middle of the very first day, one of Paramount's head production guys came out and said, 'You're through here by tonight. Cecil B. DeMille wants to come out. You got to clear the set.'

So that's how it was, thrown around, pushed around by Mr. Sol Siegel, whom I do not respect. Anyhow, he since became a big executive and maybe I became a fair director.

BP: Of your early films we've only been able to see *Great Flamarion* and *Railroaded*. Are any of the others of any particular interest?

AM: No. I don't think so. I think it's just lucky that they got made. They cost nothing so there were no losses. They were made as second features, but in terms of skill and ability I don't think they have much. In terms of experience, I learned a lot. People can't learn the easy way.

CW: Do you feel you had any greater freedom on these smaller budget films, did they leave you alone more?

AM: It wasn't a question of leaving me alone – they just said 'get through with it' 'hurry up, don't go over budget'. This was the freedom. If someone said 'Now Mr. Mann, I . . .' that would take up too much time, and we had no time.

CW: What was the atmosphere at Republic when you were there?

AM: I wouldn't want to say any of my happiest days were spent there, I would say they were fairly grim! Grim, grim days. But I did have quite a fascinating experience there with Erich von Stroheim with *Great Flamarion*.

Von Stroheim, to say the least, was difficult. He was a personality, not really an actor. He looked well on film. But he was a great director. I'll never forget one thing he said: 'Tony, do you want to be a great director? Photograph the whole of *Great Flamarion* through my monocle!' I said: 'That's a helluvan idea, but I only have \$150,000 and fourteen days.' I said: 'It might be a fascinating idea, but I'll let you do it.'

I'll tell you one funny story about him. He had no hair, and always used to put pomade on his bald pate to make it shine. He was very dapper, and always wore gold capes. This is the sort of guy the great Flamarion was and he fitted it well. So there was a very simple scene which should have taken me five minutes to shoot – because of Mr. von Stroheim it took five hours. All it was – he had murdered Dan Dureya and he had a rendezvous with a girl in a park, and all he had to do was sit down for a moment and say: 'Where are you going to be? Give me your phone number and I will get in touch with you in a month when the police are no longer watching.' That's all it was. We had no money: couldn't do it outside or even inside. We didn't even have a park, so we decided to do it in a fog. We filled the studio with fog and had a bench and a light, and it looked like a park. And he was supposed to go through this scene. Well, he was always a man who liked gadgets – he liked gold watches, pens and pencils and so on, and he asked me if he could use them. This was all part of the man, so I said: 'Sure go ahead. The camera is here, stationary position; the girl is in the foreground; we see you coming out of the fog; you ask for her address; then look at her for a moment; and then leave.' Should have taken two minutes!

Well, the fog was covering the stage. He came down through it, sat down, said: 'Darling, where are you going to be?' She said *suchandsuch* – and then he started to search around for his pen and notebook, fumbling through his pockets. I yelled: 'Cut – what's happening?' and he said: 'I'm looking for my pen.' Well he came down again, through the fog; sat down; went into the line again; pulled out the pen – then he took the cap off; put it on the other end, and then started searching for his address book. So I yelled: 'Cut' again and he said: 'Well, I'm looking for my address book' I said: 'Forgodsake, it's in your pocket; it doesn't

have to take so long. We haven't got so much time in the film just for this little scene. You know where your pen is; you know where your address book is; take 'em out and just write the address down.'

Third time. He came down out of the fog; went through the routine with the girl; took out his pen; took out the gold book, and then he started to fumble with that because he couldn't open it. So I cut again. By this time, the fog had vanished, and it took another hour to fill up our bare stage with fog again. Down he came; sat down at the bench; asked the question; pulled out the pen; pulled out the book; started to write in it – then he stopped – I said: 'What's the matter Erich?' And he said: 'There's no ink in the pen.' And these are the kind of machinations I had to go through with him for every scene. He drove me mad. He was a genius. I'm not a genius: I'm a worker. Geniuses sometimes end up very unhappy, without a penny. That's what happened to Erich and Preston Sturges, too.

Railroaded was made in ten days. *T Men* was the first big one. I worked on the script from scratch, and it was the first film on which I was able to do this. The others were given to me. One takes anything and tries to make some sort of mark.

T Men was originally only an idea, and I was able to work with William Eiric from the Treasury Department. He brought all the files, so that we could devise and create a story with John Higgins that at least had some potency and value. This is what I really call my first film. I was responsible for its story, for its structure, its characters and for actually making it. This was my first real break towards being able to make films the way I wanted.

BP: This was also the first film that gave John Alton any kind of big break, wasn't it?

AM: Well, it was certainly one of his first big ones. John started working with me on that one. He was a very talented and imaginative cameraman. He could get all sorts of effects with very limited budgets. And this is what we were working on. And actually we shot this one all outdoors, in the shops, and so on: like they do now, and everybody says is a new move. But *T Men* was twenty years ago.

BP: In a TV interview here in England on 'Violence in Art,' you said that people first started to take notice of your films when you injected a lot of violence into them – is this *T Men* again?

AM: Critics are violent people anyway. They like to praise you to the skies or tear you, cut you from ear to ear. Violence is always pictorially shocking. You can achieve fantastic effects of violence just by implication and design. And it is one of the good parts of our medium – it tends to shock and tends to excite the imagination and to rouse feelings in the audience that they've seen something and experienced something.

BP: Something I always remember from *Reign of Terror*, is the man jumping on to a coach and having a pistol going off in his face, which is also done in a couple of other films Cameron Menzies worked on – I was wondering who thought this trick up? You have the shot of his powder-burned face which is quite shocking.

AM: Well I can't remember really, but Mr. Cameron Menzies is probably one of the really great men of the film industry. I think him the most creative designer, the most creative art director I ever worked with.

BP: You first ran into him on the Selznick films?

AM: Yes, he also did Sam Wood's films and then Selznick's. We made *Reign of Terror* for about \$750,000 which is practically nothing. It was shot in twenty to twenty-five days, and it was only through his ability that we were able to achieve any style, feeling or period. For instance, we were faced with the problem of recreating the commune, which was supposed to be packed with thousands and thousands of people. And the money we had could only get us 100 people for one day. So Menzies devised a scheme whereby for that day we put all these people on a platform like at a football or baseball field, but straight up so it would be square. And we sat the 100 people, crowded into this small space, put the camera so they would just fill the frame, and John Alton lit it with some shafts of light at different angles, so we'd have light and shadow, and so some of the people would be seen and some would be shadowed. And then for a day, I shot all the reactions to all the speeches of Robespierre and Danton and so forth.

Then, we took it, and multiplied it twenty times, projecting it on a rear-projecting machine so that we no longer had 100 people; we had 2,000. It was on a rear projector, and all we had in the foreground was a big, big door, with the guards standing on duty. As the door opened Robespierre walked in, and the people rose, the 2,000 people against this background. And then for all the speeches, we just went into big close up of Robespierre against this background of people who were screaming and yelling. We were able to achieve this tremendous effect with only 100 people. And this was conceived completely by Cameron Menzies, who was a great, creative designer, a man who could do *Gone With the Wind* which was completely realistic, but a man who also had the imagination to take something which was essentially very small.

BP: Did he also do *Raw Deal* with you?

AM: No. Alton did but not Menzies.

BP: You did the three independent productions – *T Men*, *Raw Deal* and *Reign of Terror* and then what – did Metro take over the whole unit, you, Alton, John Higgins and Charles McGraw?

AM: Yes. Metro said: 'Make whatever picture you want.' John and I had thought of doing *Border Incident*, because the guys there were also involved with the Federal agents and T Men. Through the research we had made with *T Men* we found the fantastic story of the *Border Incident* boys. We made it on location, but it was really not Metro's cup of tea. When it came out, they were flabbergasted. It wasn't anything they thought a motion picture should be!

BP: Who thought of the scene where the guy escapes from the agents by driving the motor cycle along the furrow of a ploughed field?

AM: That was me. I was down there in the lettuce fields and it looked like a wonderful way to do it.

CW: How was *Winchester 73* conceived. It's very formal. Did it take its structure from the novel?

AM: Well it did come from a novel, 'one of Stuart Lake's, I think, and it had the formality as the gun was used as a calling card for many of the characters. Every one of the characters wanted it; it was a prize. Thus you were

able to meet a great many more characters, because it changed hands so much. Therefore, it gave it a unity: the gun itself almost becoming a character. The gun became the thing that brought everyone together; and the thing that finally killed what it was in pursuit of.

BP: *The Furies* for me is your first really outstanding film, the first I remember really vividly.

AM: That was made for Hal Wallis and Paramount and I actually think it was the first Western I did. Of all the men I've ever worked with, Wallis is the best producer. He knows about film making, and has his own opinions. If he doesn't agree with you, you have a helluva fight, but at least he knows what he's trying for, and in this sense he's very good. He's an expert film maker.

We had Walter Huston on it. He was a man who adored his profession. He was everything that one hopes an actor will be. He actually did the roping of the bulls, rode his horse, and he was sixty-odd.

CW: What about *Thunder Bay* and *Strategic Air Command*?

AM: *Thunder Bay* was made in the Florida bayous and the Gulf of Mexico. Its story was weak and we never were really able to lick it. I think it was a little too commercial and it fell down on its basic plot. Some of the things we showed were effective and beautiful I think, but I don't think it was a very good script. Borden worked on it, John Michael Hayes worked on it who was a good writer and has developed into a very good one. There were too many writers, and it became too fabricated. They wanted a picture with Jimmy Stewart and we concocted one. *Strategic Air Command* was an entirely different kind of thing, because that was to promote the Air Force and the idea of SAC which in itself had its own restrictions, just being a military subject. Therefore, the co-operation of the Air Force was vital, and we were held within the bounds of what they wanted. The story itself was restricted and the whole concept of its shooting was confined to what they would let me show, which is perfectly all right. I went into it purely as a service to the Air Force, and as Jimmy Stewart was of the Force, we accepted this handicap and just tried to make an exciting film, not out of the characters which were *papier-mâché*, but out of the B36 and B47 – we tried to dramatize them as our two great characters.

CW: *Men in War* had 'Show me the foot soldier and I'll show you the story of all war' as its theme.

AM: That's right – I just had an idea. I wanted to tell a story of the detail of war. The detail of war is what all the soldiers went through: that they had sand in their boots; that their gun jammed; that they took off their helmets at the wrong time; that they had to walk through forests of mines; or walk through bombardments. I was interested only in the foot soldier. Nobody knows why they have to take such and such a hill. They just are told to take it. So I lived with the guys, and I wanted to tell the story through tiny personal incidents.

I used simple people – and did it all in twenty-four days. Actually, we had two units working side by side. I think it did come off.

BP: How do you feel about the *Tin Star*? I believe George Seaton was originally scheduled to direct it.

AM: I don't remember if George was ever going to work on it. It's a fair film. Again, there was too much supervision. I really believe that in order to create a good film one has to do it completely on one's own. The picture may not be a success even then, but it stands a greater chance if you leave the artistic endeavour to the director. *God's Little Acre* on the other hand was a different sort of challenge. Everyone said it wasn't possible to make a film from this Caldwell book – and if you read it, it's about the kookiest book you've ever seen. It was a challenge to try and find the spirit behind the book and behind these miserable characters. It became another experiment and was entirely another kind of picture, I rehearsed with the actors, for the first time, for about three weeks before we started shooting, so that they would all know the characters and would all know each other and become a family, react properly. This became more of a group sort of thing, more theatre than I usually do.

CW: This was all done out in Georgia?

AM: No – they threw us out of Georgia because they didn't want us to make the film, but I found in a place called Stockton, California, all the vine-covered factories, the old, old buildings and houses that were Augustus, Georgia, so I was able to duplicate the Old South there.

Gary Cooper in
Man of the West



CW: Do you think your early days as an actor influenced your attitude to films – you were talking about films springing from their characters. Now suppose you had been an editor first and not an actor, do you think your attitudes would be different?

AM: No, I don't think being an editor gives you the same background at all. Because editing is just using film; you're just taking film, putting it together and doing what the director wants. I think acting and having lived in the theatre is a much greater education in learning how to make films, learning how to delve into character and learning how to understand the actor's problem and understand the staging problem and understanding the writer's problem. Now I know there have been several directors who have come from editing – Wise, Robson and so forth – but I still don't think being an editor alone gives the full knowledge

and the full meaning of what it is to create a character on film, and to make it live on film.

CW: Do you have any ideas formulated about the Western?

AM: Well, I think the reason why it's the most popular and long-lasting *genre* is that it gives you more freedom of action, in landscape, in passion. It's a primitive form. It's not governed by rule; you can do anything with it. It has the essential pictorial qualities; has the guts of any character you want; the violence of anything you need; the sweep of anything you feel; the joy of sheer exercise, of outdooriness. It is legend – and legend makes the very best cinema. It excites the imagination more – it's something audiences love. They don't have to say: 'Oh I know about that'; they just need to feel it and be with it, because legend is a concept of characters greater than life. It releases you from inhibitions, rules. Because – how does an Indian act? How does he ride over the plains? How does a man come into a bar and shoot somebody? This doesn't happen any more. It isn't going on now, but it is a spirit, a kind of freedom of action and movement which instils itself into the minds of the audience. They say: 'Oh, I wish I were in that time – isn't it fantastic what they accomplished in those days, what their dreams were, what their actions were?'

There are of course many other types of movie to be made. There are the new schools of motion pictures being made, but they limit you – for instance, Joe Losey's very good. *The Servant* is very effective, very well done – for its subject, extraordinarily well done – and it broke new ground and many new barriers in terms of morals and so on; but it left you small and mean and petty; it didn't release you from anything; it drove home the oppression and weight of its theme rather than bursting you out of it. And this is what the Western does – it releases you, you can ride on the plains; you can capture the windswept skies; you can release your audiences and take them out to places which they never would have dreamt of.

And, more important – it releases the characters. They can be more primitive; they can be more Greek, like *Oedipus Rex* or *Antigone*, you see, because you are dealing again in a sweeping legend. This is what I love

in picture making, and really what I stand for. Because *El Cid* is really a Spanish Western, and it's legend again. *Roman Empire* is even more than that. I spent a great deal of time in the snow-country, shot a whole funeral in the snow, and it's all tremendously pictorial. But it's bound by history and certain rules, because certain things have to happen. It wasn't completely a legend though it has a legendary quality.

BP: As you mentioned *Oedipus*, there's this element which starts with *Furies*: this business of the father-killer. It's in *Winchester 73*, *Man of the West*, *Man from Laramie* and Borden Chase uses it in *Backlash*. This is a thread that runs through the fifties' Westerns – tough, grim subjects. Can you tell us why this should be?

AM: Well – it's also in *Roman Empire*. There he tries to kill his father's image, because this image is greater than his own. This is the story underneath the Oedipus drama. I don't know of any great man who ever had a great son. This must have been a terrible thing for the son – to live with the image of his father, for although this is a love-image, it can also be a hate-image. This theme is recurrent, because it is a very strong one and, consequently, I like it – it reaches to heights and depths beyond more mundane stories.

BP: It seems that through the fifties you, John Sturges and Delmer Daves have a sort of unity of thought – set-ups, ideas, actors, cameramen crop up in each of your films – was there any kind of community where you all got together and talked over ideas and so on?

AM: No – actually I know them both. But we haven't spent any time together, even in a discussion of ideas. No, they are similar, but they came out very unconsciously.

CW: Back to your Westerns – from the very pure *Bend of the River*, they seem to get tougher, more cynical until in *Cimarron* the Hero, Glenn Ford, disappears and the film concentrates on Maria Schell. This is a little bit like the death of the West. If you had had your way, would you have concentrated more on the Ford character?

AM: Well, actually that whole picture was a mistake. Originally I had a wonderful idea for it, and the Metro executives agreed with me. After I had been shooting

for twelve days, they decided to take the whole company indoors, so it became an economic disaster and a fiasco and the whole project was destroyed.

I wanted to show a huge plain out in the West with nothing on it, and how a group of men and women gathered at a line, and tore out across this plain and set up their stakes as claim for the land. And how a town, a city and finally a metropolis grew, all on this one piece of land. It would have been, I think, a tremendous experience for the world to see. This is how America was built. But the executives panicked. We had a couple of storms – which I shot in anyway – but they thought we'd have floods and so on, so they dragged us in and everything had to be duplicated on the set. The story had to be changed, because we couldn't do the things we wanted to. So I don't consider it a film. I just consider it a disaster.

CW: How can you have Glenn Ford die the most ignoble death of all – dying offscreen?

AM: Well, it wasn't shot that way, I promise you – there was a huge oil sequence and oil wells were blowing up and he was saving people and being very heroic. Why they ever changed it I'll never know – this was Mr. Sol Siegel, he did it behind my back, I didn't ever see it. If I'd screamed they wouldn't have bothered anyway; so I just let them destroy it at will.

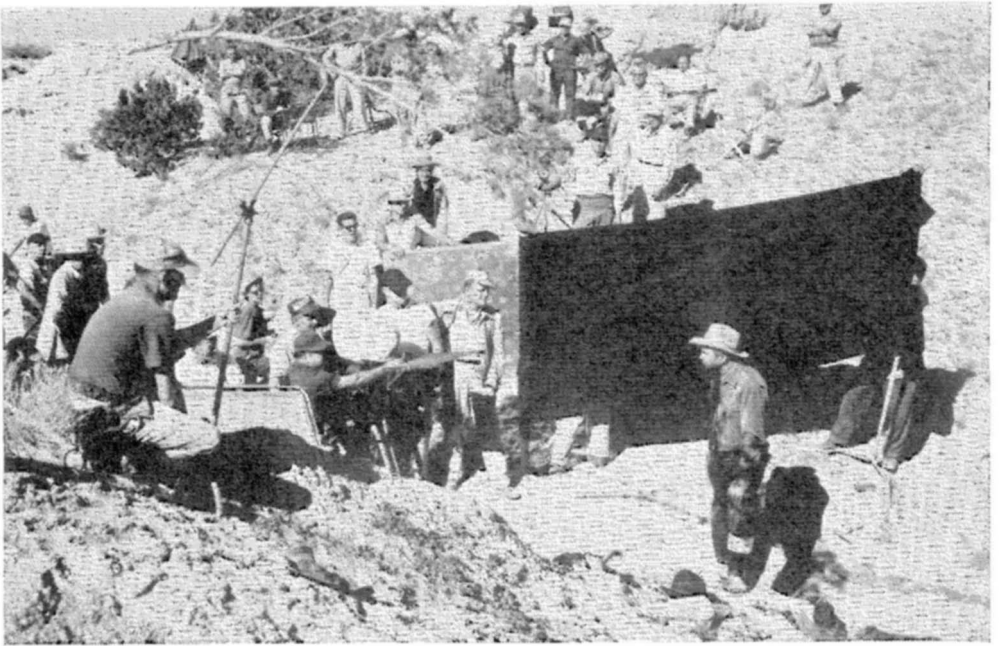
CW: Do you think going out and shooting on location, doing it all physically, is the only way you can work?

AM: Yes, I think it's the only way to work anyway with films.

I find by going out on location – like on *Heroes of Telemark* – that having gone up there and seen the ice lakes and the snow and so on, I can do things that I would not have done otherwise. I thought about it all, and utilized the very things that are indigenous to a country. Locations give you all sorts of ideas, if you look for them.

BP: In *Bend of the River*, *Man from Laramie* and *El Cid* again, you have scenes staged on the snowline – was this just another way of getting more interesting shots?

AM: No, no – it shows a battling of the elements which I think is always good. You push actors and the whole



Mann directing
James Stewart in
Man from Laramie

company into something that is tough – if it really is tough, it can show itself on the screen much better. Certainly snow and so on is very pictorial, and you can produce all sorts of effects by it – horses breathing, the actors breathing, the difficulty of the terrain, the actual struggle one has to put forth in just doing the physical things, like climbing a mountain, say. It all adds a reality that is difficult to achieve in a studio. Things become so much more phoney indoors.

The studio isn't on your neck, nobody can control you, so you are at least able to do what you want to do – and this is wonderful, because it does give you a much greater freedom of movement and expression. They don't dare come up and see you because it would be too much hardship for them. In that sense, the more you can be left alone, the better you can make a picture.

CW: The *Winchester 73* climax is staged in the rocks, and turns up at least twice more in your films – is this adding to the drama, the idea of the elements again?

AM: Well, again there, I went out hunting for locations and, in looking over the terrain, this area excited me, because I saw all these rocks and caverns, holes and whatnot. I thought it would make a wonderful battle-

ground between the two guys. You couldn't have a battle between two experts out in the open – they could both shoot each other like that (*snaps fingers*). So you have to make it almost impossible for either of them to shoot the other, so that their expertness is doubly in use – now they also have to flush each other out, by manœuvring and cunning.

CW: You mentioned that you were able to achieve a sense of period here. Now, obviously, this is important for this kind of subject, and, in thrillers, period is inherent, because they are contemporary. But it's interesting that in your Westerns, again, one senses a period; they are set in time – towns change and grow up – although it is never any explicit time. Why is this so?

AM: Well, of course, you always do try to get a feel of the period, if only because it enhances the characters and enhances the picture – in fact period can work for you. The very nature of the period can be the thing that gives you the key to the very things that you do and use to make it different. The huge six-foot blades I use in *El Cid* were of that period. So these weapons became great things for me to use. They hadn't been used before; I don't know why – maybe because once you start swinging you can't stop, and the actors have to be very careful and need to be rehearsed like in a ballet. But because you are using such a weapon, it becomes much more honest in terms of that period.

CW: Suppose somebody came to you with a script – what would be the factors to make you want or not want to do it?

AM: Well, first of all it would depend on its theme and its content. I would have to be interested in its subject matter. Now, of course, as I feel I don't *have* to make them, I want as much freedom as I can have and as much time to work on the script with the writers as I can. I want as much freedom of creativity as possible – it's not that I want it because I feel I'm the only guy that can do it, but because it's the only way to work. Every time I've had 'supervision' the film has suffered. Therefore, no longer do I want it; no longer would I tolerate it; no longer would I accept it. But one has to learn the hard way.

CW: On which of your films did you have the greatest freedom?

AM: Well, let's see – I had a great deal of freedom with *Men in War* and *God's Little Acre*, *Winchester 73* and *Bend of the River*. I would say I had *no* freedom with *Cimarron* and *less* freedom (because Metro started to impose its will) with films like *Devil's Doorway* and *Tall Target*. The first one I had more freedom with was *Border Incident*, because they didn't even know what kind of animal I was.

CW: Was Fritz Lang in any way involved with *Winchester 73*?

AM: Absolutely not! At one time Fritz Lang was interested in a project written by Stuart Lake which was an historical compilation of the story of the Winchester rifle. This was at Universal, and two or three years afterwards he had not one foot of film shot, not one idea. In fact I threw everything out that he had even remotely thought about. It wasn't the kind of film I wanted to make anyway.

CW: So there's nothing of Lang's in it at all?

AM: No. Nothing. I absolutely, positively guarantee it.

CW: Right. Well, we were going through your films in order and I think we had got as far as *Serenade*.

AM: . . . Oh, that's a wild and Hollywoodien story. My agents, MCA, were handling Mario Lanza, and they introduced me to him. I got to know him and I really liked the guy, even though everyone was kicking him down, saying he'd never make another film. And I guess it was really more out of a stupid sentimentality, but I felt sorry for the guy. And I got to know him, got to know his children, and wife and family. The more I got to know him, the better I liked him. I knew it was going to be a terrible, terrible problem, because he was a compulsive eater and a compulsive drinker, but he was a marvellous, warm-hearted guy and I don't think all the horrible things they said about him were true. He really was a man who was pushed into something that he should never have been pushed into. Because, you know, he had two chances, two great chances at nineteen or twenty, when he was in the Army. One was that Toscanini came to see him and said: 'Look, boy, you work with me for two years and you'll be a great Othello.' The other was that Louis B. Mayer came to him and said: 'I can make you a star overnight.' Well,

he made a bad choice, the wrong choice. He'd be alive today, if he'd gone with Toscanini. But anyhow, I got to know him well, and everybody said: 'Oh, Tony, don't make a film with him.' It was probably sentiment, but I decided I would. Terrible things happened, it was all very, very difficult, and the fact that I was able to finish it was a miracle. That's the only miracle about it, because the film's not good. I thought he did a couple of scenes quite well: his singing of Othello was very beautiful. After all, he has to sing something like twelve arias, or more. You know, it was one of those things for which I should never have approached, but I'm glad I did it in a way. At least it got him a couple more pictures before he died.

But we tried very hard to make something of it pictorially and went to some magnificent places in Mexico. And we did a big firework scene when the whole town comes out, and Indians come from all over Mexico and swarm into the town. There were some fascinating pictorial things like that. But its story was weak. How can you tell a story anyway when you're singing arias all the time.

CW: Did you have any worries about similar, musical aspects of *Glen Miller Story*?

AM: No, that was an entirely different thing. The reason I became interested in it was that I wanted to dramatize a *sound*. And it's the story of finding a *new* sound. Jimmy Stewart is a great professional. Our great thing was to try and *pictorialize* all Miller's great songs. To tell the story of a man who is hunting something new and finally finds it, and who, during the war years, became one of the great heroes. We tried to make the narrative a little different too. When he proposes to June Allyson, it's very humorous, because she has curlers in, and so forth. At the end when he's dead, instead of very sentimental music, we played 'Little Brown Jug,' so that it gave it a different feeling from just sentimentality. Of course the film was fraught with sentimentality. But we had those revolving lights, went to Denver and did all sorts of things to get the ballrooms right, and all the things that were part and parcel of an era, the band era, of Glenn and Tommy Dorsey and all the others. It was certainly the most successful of this type of movie.

CW: I wonder if you regretted leaving Universal?

AM: No I didn't regret it. I never regret leaving anywhere. But I was never under contract to them; I just worked picture to picture. In those days people used to say: 'If you've got a contract you're safe.' Well, there's no such thing as being safe: particularly in this business. That's the time when you're *unsafe*, when you're safe. You think you can lean back, rest, say: 'I'm OK, I've got a job.' But the next film you do, if it's a flop nobody's going to hire you again anyway. So you gamble on your life every time you make a film, and that's the excitement. So I don't regret leaving, though I had a lot of fun there and I think I *saved* them, because I made them a lot of very successful pictures and, up to that time, they were in bad shape.

CW: *Last Frontier* is a fascinating picture and has Victor Mature playing exactly what he is. . . .

AM: . . . an animal, yeah. Well, the French think this is the great film, remarkable and so forth. Now I had a terrible time with Victor; he was very ill in Mexico. But it was a terrific idea, helluvan idea, the story of a savage who wants to earn a uniform and who finds out all the bad things about a uniform along with the good, and struggles, and finally wins it. But I had a terrible time with it. But Anne Bancroft was in it, and Bob Preston, and James Whitmore. Bill Mellor did the camerawork. It had a very interesting theme: that was fascinating to develop. It was an historical fact that we took from, with the actual battle in the dust when all the Indians come down into the valley and the dust filled the valley and you couldn't see any bluecoats. The dust was so fine in Mexico, you just had to walk and the air was permeated with it. We finally had to wear gas masks to keep our lungs free.

CW: Did you choose that one?

AM: Yes, I not only chose it, I worked very closely with the writer. I worked with Philip Yordan on that. I worked with Philip on two or three pictures: *God's Little Acre*, *Men in War*. I've hired him and he's hired me; we've done about five pictures.

CW: So you took the film to Columbia?

AM: No. By the way, the title *Last Frontier* was a Howard

Fast story, a wonderful story on the Indian that John Ford tried to use in *Cheyenne Autumn* and didn't do correctly. But I had made *Man from Laramie* and Harry Cohn said: 'You've got to make another Western for me.' So I said: 'Let me read some properties; let me see what's around.' And this story that we titled *Last Frontier* kind of appealed to me.

Harry thought the idea was good so we went ahead. So it was hunting for something and then finding the particular idea which I liked. Again everybody said; 'You're mad to use Victor,' but he was the *rightest* person I knew. And he loved it.

CW: You presumably prefer to work with a film 'actor' like James Stewart, for instance, as opposed to the film 'personality' like Mature?

AM: Well, Stewart is a man who's devoted his whole life to acting and who's quite brilliant in what he does. He's very skilful and, once you start going with him, he's marvellous to work with, because he's always there; he's always anxious; he wants to be great; and this is not true of the other gentleman in question.

CW: Stewart's great moments of wild and desperate emotion in your films – being dragged through the fire in *Laramie*; shot to pieces and thrown in the river in *Far Country*; the blind anger in the saloon fight in *Winchester '73* – is this deep passion completely natural to him or do you have to dig for it?

AM: Natural to him? Within himself he has something much more burning and exciting than when you meet him personally. And he'll say: 'Look, Tony, if you want me to be pulled through the fire, then I'll do it. If you want me to fight under the horses' hooves, I'll do it.' This is the kind of guy he is; he likes to have to do these things. And a lot of actors don't. Mature can't get near a horse. It's a curse when they don't learn; when they're not adept at the art of riding, fencing, swimming and the other things that are necessary, which they must learn, if they don't know.

CW: How do you mould an actor to fit your requirements. How do you get Stewart to do it the first time, or Mature, or Cooper?

AM: Well, Jimmy Stewart was in a summer company I had at the Red Barn theatre in Locust Valley when he'd

just come out of college, so I had known him and had directed him in a couple of plays. He had seen *The Furies* and had asked for me, actually, and that's how the relationship got going again. I didn't like the property; I didn't like *Winchester* at all. This was Lang's version. I was working at Metro and everybody was pressuring me to make the film and I said: 'I'd like to make the film, if you let me rewrite it completely. I want a new writer, new everything; I don't want the property the way it is.' Finally, after a lot of haranguing, they agreed that I could do that and I brought in Borden Chase and we started from scratch on the script and it developed day by day. This is how all films are made, at least as far as I'm concerned.

But about actors. Naturally you have to utilize their greatest abilities and qualities, and you strengthen them if you can. You push them against something that's maybe foreign to them, but which, therefore, becomes more exciting, because you still have the same guy, but now you have him doing something that's more against his nature, so already you have a conflict of character against personality. This is good. So you have two dimensions to start with. Now, if you take him outdoors and put him into locations, you have three dimensions, because now you have all the elements fighting him. Then you pit him against some very violent pieces of action and you have a fourth dimension. Thus you build the character and situation.

CW: As you made so many films with Stewart, can it be assumed that he is your archetypal 'hero'?

AM: Well no, because each film is an entirely different entity. I'd love to use him again, but I haven't had a script. I couldn't use him in *El Cid*; I couldn't use him in *God's Little Acre*, *Roman Empire*; couldn't have used him in lots of films. It has nothing to do with him; it's just the films are entirely out of his element.

CW: But regarding the Westerns . . .

AM: Well, with the Westerns, he had a great quality. Cooper certainly did, too. He is magnificent walking down a street with a Winchester rifle cradled in his arm, and so is Jimmy *firing* the Winchester. He studied hard at it, you know? He worked so hard his knuckles were raw with practising, so that he could be *right*. And we had an expert from the Winchester Arms Company who

taught him how to really *uniquely* use the gun. These are the things that give it a sense of tremendous reality.

CW: With *Man of the West*, presumably you started from scratch again?

AM: Well, that was written by Reginald Rose, who did *12 Angry Men*. And he was a little more difficult, because they had bought his script and they wanted to stick with it, and I didn't really want to.

CW: Was it originally a TV play?

AM: No it wasn't. It was an original screenplay. And I had to try and break it from its rigidity, which was mostly *talk*. I would have changed the girl completely, if I'd only driven hard enough. But I wasn't able to convince the guys who were producing. I eventually convinced Cooper, but by then it was too late.

CW: What would she have been?

AM: She'd have been his wife. It would have been much more moving. The other girl was stupid, and I hated it, and wanted to change it, and they wouldn't let me. Just *imagine* if the *wife* had to do what she has to do. Then it becomes much more poignant; then he would fight to the death.

CW: And give greater power to the scene when he strips Jack Lord.

AM: Sure, if it had been his wife he was getting even for, it would have been terrifying! It would have been a great film. It was almost, but it could have had that difference. There was this evil, and a man trying to destroy his own evil. And this is why, if it had been the wife, it would have been much greater. But it was a man who looked at his past and said: 'I must at all cost destroy what I have been.' He tries to run away from it; he gets away, but now it comes back. He is confronted again with his own evil. He knows he was that kind of a person – could he withstand it? Or would he degenerate back into it?

CW: Not only the characters, but that ugly shack on the miserable plain, the ghost town and everything, are manifestations of the hate, evil, waste, and so on. How do you arrive at this 'pictorialization' when you embark on the actual work? How do you arrive at these tangible evocations of the mood and theme?



Man From Laramie

AM: Well, you do many things. You dramatize it by the juxtaposition of characters, putting them into situations that can drive them into that kind of a place. You know, you *look* for these places; you *look* for these things. Take *Man From Laramie*. Out in the middle of a plain, a man is grabbed and his two arms are held and the gunmen are going to shoot his hand off. Well, it could have been done in many places, but, in the middle of this plain, it was frightening, because there was this beautiful expanse of country with all this evil going on in it. It's the juxtaposition of the very nature of the land, the very mountains, the very rivers, the very dust. All these you use to heighten the drama.

CW: You were saying about *Telemark* that you'd gone on location and found things and knew what was there, and implied that you might change things in the script to fit or at least enhance or clarify. . . .

AM: Sure, there are many things that you come across – for instance, in the back of my mind, I had always thought for *Roman Empire*, I would love to do the death of Marcus Aurelius in the snow. One morning I woke up and it was *really* snowing. So I called everybody early and I got them up there and I said: 'I know it's

freezing to death here, but we'll put you in warm tents and we're going to do this sequence all in the snow.' It was marvellous! Because it had a silence about it, a kind of majesty it wouldn't have had if it had been done on a sunny day or any other kind of a day.

CW: I really thought that was a marvellous film. You've revealed the madness of the world, the decline of the *spirit*. . . .

AM: Of course! (*He pounds the table vehemently*). That's all I wanted to dramatize. Now I guarantee you there is not one person that had read Gibbon. I guarantee you! From Bosley Crowther on down or up. And for them to start to say: 'This isn't Gibbon' – well this is a lot of crap! Because all we were trying to do was dramatize how an empire fell. Incest, buying an army, destroying the will of the people to speak through the senate, all these things, I can name 'em all, were in the film. And these were the seeds that led us to say at the end: 'This is the beginning'; we didn't say: 'This was the fall.' And they *pounced* on that and said that that was pompous for me to have said – well, it would've been pompous of me, if I *hadn't* said it. But you can't argue with these bums. They think they know it all. They said things weren't true. Well, it was historically *exactly* true. From the material that we got, Faustina had been playing around with all sorts of guys and, even though Marcus Aurelius loved her and built temples to her to protect her name, it was known throughout Rome that she had been having affairs with gladiators and so forth. So everybody starts to criticize us, because this isn't in the encyclopaedia. But this is all they do; they go to their source material, which is the encyclopaedia: no further.

CW: So how do you relate these facts to the process of making a narrative?

AM: Well, for instance, there was actually a man named Pertinax. And I didn't want to make the history so close that it would impair the film – you see, if you say *everything* is historical, then you don't have the liberty – but there was a man called Pertinax who was the next in line. We were originally going to call Livius, Pertinax, but we decided against it, because we didn't want to tie it down so closely. Marcus Aurelius was one of the students of Hadrian. There was a law that no emperor could accede through a succession. The emperor must

chose and train three or four men to succeed him. Marcus Aurelius himself was trained and Antonius and quite a few others, during Hadrian's time. That Marcus Aurelius decreed that his empire was to be left to Carmodus has always been very doubtful history, because, knowing the emperor as well as everyone knew him, for him to have left it to his son was not possible. So there was always this mystery about whether he had been poisoned or not. So we *used* it. These were all part of the things I had read. Then they scream and claim it is not historically *accurate*. It had more truth in it than untruth. And we tried to make it all as modern as possible so that it could be related to any society; so that people would understand.

CW: And that lovely scene when Guinness is trying to fend off the voices of death . . .

AM: The guy in *Newsweek* asked what right I had to do that scene. I said: 'Are you kidding me? I have the right to do anything I please! That *you* don't like, it is something else again. I'm sorry for you; you don't know *what* I was trying to *do*. It's about a man who's preparing for death and isn't ready for death. A man who was preparing an empire and it isn't ready for him to leave it yet. This was the story. There was a real idea behind that scene. Not something just tossed away.

CW: And the same device is repeated with Sophia Loren, the only other character to understand.

AM: Right, she feels it and sees what is happening in the world and tries to scream it out. Well, it took a lot of guts to do it this way.

This interview originally appeared in a slightly different form in *Positif*.

Interview with Delmer Daves

Christopher Wicking

CW: Before becoming a director you had a career as an actor, then as a writer. How have these shaped your attitude to directing?

DD: My first career was the law – I did graduate law work at Stanford, had my office picked out and everything. I'd acted in twenty plays and directed some too. Lloyd Nolan and I were classmates and he dearly loved the theatrical profession. He said: 'You don't want to be a lawyer Del, let's go down to Pasadena Playhouse and do what we really love.' My father let me give up eighteen years of schooling with hardly a murmur. He was very much like the Henry Fonda character in *Spencer's Mountain*. We would be talking about religion and he'd say – before you make any decision: 'Go to every church there is. Go to the Catholic church; go to the Baptist church; go to all the Protestant churches; go to the Episcopalians; go to the Jewish synagogue; add it all up yourself.' Ever since I've had a respect for the other man's religion. Don't be too quick to dismiss them. I respect other people's religions around the world and seek to find out what has great meaning to them, and I've done a great study on the religions of the world and I always will, part of this trying to understand the Indian and the oriental and all peoples so my next film might very well be an oriental, and try to do a *Broken Arrow* on the orientals, one with Chinese, let's put it that way.

But fresh out of college I landed a job as property boy with James Cruze who directed *Covered Wagon* and some famous films in the '20s. I also acted in the film, did the lettering for an insert and designed a poster. Cruze liked me, sponsored me really, and gave me my first real acting job opposite Joan Crawford in *The Duke Steps Out* in 1928. That was a college story and Cruze

recommended me to Sam Wood who was going to make the first college talkie. Sam Wood said he'd like to have me write. I was dubious because I had no idea at all; I had never taken a single course in writing, because when you do graduate law work you're busy from morning to night. But I wrote about twenty pages in long-hand in pencil on yellow paper. It was utterly unprofessional, but Sam saw something in it. In retrospect the answer's very simple -- I was an actor, and I could write things that could be acted. Many novelists can't write screenplays. I began on the basis of writing words that wereactable, of writing scenes that played. And the greatest thanks I can give my university background is that I had the opportunity to play everything from broad comedy to Macbeth which gave me a great understanding of actors. One of the director's duties, one of the thousand duties that the public isn't aware of, is that of the protector of actors. I remember on *To the Victor* I asked one of the actors to take a fall from a window and when we got up on the set, he looked down and said: 'Del, I could get hurt,' and I said: 'If you could get hurt, I don't want you to do it, but let me try it for you first.' I do this quite often, actually, even though I'm nearing sixty now, I still do it. I sat in the window and took the fall, about eight, ten, feet, to the top of a parallel, a thing they call a rostrum here, and it had on the top of it a couple of mattresses. But the prop man hadn't placed them carefully, so that the corners of the rostrum stuck up and my head hit one and my ankle hit the other. I finished the fall and got down to the ground and said: 'It's perfectly safe, won't hurt you a bit.' He was very impressed with the fact that I did it, because he was much younger than I was, but I immediately told the prop man: 'For heaven's sake cover the two points where my head and my foot hit quick.' So in that way you find you have to protect your actors and sometimes you meet with their ingratitude.

I remember doing *Demetrius and the Gladiators*, which had Victor Mature. Now, he's not physically at ease with action and at one time during the making of that film he was frightened about getting hurt. His basis for this was that in some film he'd done for Fox in the north-west he had fractured a knee-cap or done something of the kind and he swore that he would never put

himself in the position again to lose his livelihood through such an accident. Well, it's very often natural, particularly where their eyes are in danger, that actors be frightened about doing physical stunts. So I said to Victor: 'Let me do it, let me see what happens.' I told him I'd chosen the best stunt man in the business to protect him. You know, half the time the stunt men aren't there to do stunts, but to protect the actors. Now in this scene he was supposed to be seized and dragged from a hall and thrown into a cell, and I told the stunt men: 'You do to me exactly what you were going to do to him and let him watch it.' So they grabbed me and threw me down and dragged me along the hall and tossed me into a cell and it didn't hurt at all because these men are really very skilful. But my great reward for that was Mature saying: 'Well since you're so god-damned good at it, why don't you do it in the scene?' We have to do that often, or at least I feel we do. We have to make sure that the actors are protected. Particularly in Westerns and action stories, I have to watch out for the brave ones, Glenn Ford with whom I've done *Cowboy* and *3.10 to Yuma* and *Jubal*. Glenn is very apt to take extraordinary chances, and I have to watch out for him; I have to protect him, or else he'll hurt himself. But Gary Cooper, with whom I did *The Hanging Tree*, I had to protect in another sense. Actually Coop, without my knowing it, and I think without his knowing it, had this cancer when we did *The Hanging Tree* because he was suffering getting into the saddle. We had to have a special saddle made for him, and he never had to have before, and he was puzzled by it, because he's always a good horseman and was in that film. But he said: 'Del, I don't know why it is, I've never had trouble sitting a horse before in my life, but, now I get this pain in the base of my spine getting into the saddle.' So I said: 'Well let me use a double you don't really have to get aboard a horse at any time if you don't want to,' and he said: 'No, I want to do it, but I just wanted to warn you that I'm not as easy at it as I was before.'

And in *Cowboy* Glenn Ford and Jack Lemmon actually insisted on doing the dangerous work in the cattle car. Both of them came to me and said, 'We have to do this for you. We don't want any doubles. The kind of shots we know you want we can't use doubles for, because if

you do it will look fake.' So the two men literally went down with those cattle in that cattle car; you can see it on the film. There's no joking about this.

They had a lot of courage and yet, by the same token, when we were doing the scene where Glenn had to take part in the Spanish games south of the border, he was a little fearful in that arena scene where he had to go out and ring a horn of one of these bulls. They were very spooky cattle, they came literally from the depth of Mexico, and stampeded every night the first four nights in Santa Fé, because they saw automobile lights: these cattle were raised where they're no automobiles. If they heard a horn in the night they would stampede and break down our electric fences. Our record cow stampeded twenty-six miles away, they were that wild. . . .

I told Glenn if it was dangerous we'd arrange something else. He could have had one of his eyes taken out, because the points on the horns of these cattle are like needles. So I said: 'Let me try it out, because I can be another Raoul Walsh but I don't want you another Pete Falk. So I then went out into the arena with these cattle and I found an interesting thing. Cattle, like race-horses, don't want to hurt a human being. It's magnificent to me to see a pile-up of race-horses and the way they'll side-step the jockey: nine times out of ten he'll be able to get up and walk away. Well that's what happened in this herd of cattle in the arena. As I walked through them, they had the second sense of how long their horn was and so no horn came close to my eyes, like a cat's whiskers. I think we had maybe 300 head of cattle in the arena and not one of them wanted to get anywhere near me, so of course Glenn went ahead and did the scene himself. But all this is just part of my belief that a director ought to be able to do what he expects the actor to do, and not ask an actor to do something that's hazardous, if he doesn't want to do it himself.

CW: Had you always planned to direct?

DD: I started out wanting to be a director, but I became delighted with the peace and quiet of writing. When Jack Warner told me he wanted me to direct *Destination Tokyo* I refused. I said: 'I've got my library at home, my music, and the joy of going out every morning to the

peace and quiet, or turning on my music and sitting at the typewriter. It can never be rivalled on the set by being a director.' He said: 'Direct this one film, nobody'll be able to understand your script.' Because I'd been to sea with the submarines, and written in all the technical aspects. So that's how I began to direct.

CW: All your films have a great authenticity.

DD: That may be due to the British documentary-makers, who were my guide on *Destination Tokyo*. I saw a lot of the films about the Battle of Britain and the Atlantic – and couldn't make a phoney film. I decided to use a great many new actors, to give a documentary feeling. Apart from Cary Grant and John Garfield, everybody in that film was giving his first performance. We didn't use make-up either; it seemed an insult to the fighting men to have actors play their roles with eyebrow pencil on. I did *Pride of the Marines* and *Task Force* the same way. Actually *Task Force* was almost too much of a documentary. But I received a great compliment from Willy Wyler about *Pride of the Marines*. He showed it two or three times to his actors and said: 'This is the kind of story I want to tell.' I've done the same thing in my Westerns. *Broken Arrow* was a dedication to my grandfather and to my father's family. This is all part and parcel of my heritage. I have my grandfather's diaries and he crossed the plains twice with the Mormons, went through the ordeals of being on watch and having Indians attack and all that kind of thing. My father's mother was born in California two months after the covered wagon arrived there and her mother, my great-grandmother was seven months' pregnant crossing the Sierra Nevada mountains in a covered wagon. Out of respect for these people, you can't tell stories of the west and have it fake, and that has influenced me in my directing life, in the same sense that watching the British documentaries affected my war films. That's the reason I think that in most of my Westerns there is a documentary feeling. In *Cowboy*, for example, I wanted very much to say: 'This is how the cowboy lived and what he did.' It was really a documentary of the life of a cowboy, based of course on Frank Harris's book, but we took liberties with it, because I think Harris lied about fifty per cent of the time in his book.

CW: A great deal of research goes into them?

DD: I have a great library on Americana at home and each film has been the result of a great deal of research. I'm gradually making a whole composite of the west because some of the films like *Broken Arrow*, *Drum Beat* and *The Last Wagon* portrayed Indian themes. Then we gradually move forward in the west through *Cowboy* and *The Hanging Tree* and the bad-man west, which was *3.10 to Yuma*, and gradually up into *Spencer's Mountain* which is a spiritual Western more than a physical one. It's what happened to the sons of the pioneers, so to speak.

CW: There are really three generations in that film?

DD: That's right. You know, my graduation present to myself from the university was three months living with the Indians in 1926 when Arizona was still a primitive country. Sometimes there were no roads, you had to chop down sagebrush and make a track because your tyres in those days were hard and bit into the sand. I've dug my way in and out of many a sand dune and certainly I've been all through that country my grandfather crossed with the first mail carried into Arizona. He was a pony express rider and carried the first mail from Salt Lake City into Arizona. And of course I did *Cowboy* out of Santa Fé, New Mexico, I used that as a base. My grandfather's diary tells how he twice took contracts with the army to be wagon train captain that went from Denver, Colorado down to Santa Fé, so I literally stood where my grandfather had stood in the '60s and early '70s, and was inspired by it because I got a great sense of belonging to this country.

But I will never subordinate mere fact to dramatic use. If you sat next to someone in a restaurant and put their dialogue down, that doesn't necessarily make it a good dialogue. You have to control these things but still be affected by them. But I won't be dishonest. I will not use a dishonest lens. Many directors aren't interested in lenses but a lens can make something dishonest very simply. If you use an 18 mm. lens it can make the landscape immediately dishonest by pushing it back for miles where it doesn't exist. It can also distort people, but sometimes that has a dramatic validity. Certainly if I were doing a horror story I would make great use of distorting lenses like the 18 and 22 mm. I used mostly,

for example, in my first film the 3 inch, and the 24 or 28 mm., throughout the film. The 28 and the 24 helped the urgency aspect of the film and the 3 inch searched the men's feelings. I use a 3 and 4 inch lens to force you to watch the eyes and the thoughts of the actor. In this way you're telling the truth but you control it. For instance there was only one way for me to tell the *Dark Passage* story. You couldn't have Humphrey Bogart's voice coming out of a man that wasn't Humphrey Bogart, because he's too well known. Therefore you had to create a pre-Bogart character and the only way I could think of doing it was with the subjective camera. So when that camera lay back to have the face operated on to become Bogart, it wasn't a fake. I did cut two inserts of the man he was supposed to be and that man was partly Bogart. I had a super-imposition of Bogart's eyes and eyebrows, which don't change in plastic surgery, on the face of his double who did his stunts. It was honest and to a degree Bogart was there and that face wasn't a stranger entirely. I used the camera there as realistically as I ever have and again I didn't use any make-up.

CW: You used a candid camera technique didn't you?

DD: Yes. I was the first one to use the Ariflex in the United States. We got it through the United States' government. It was a captured Nazi camera. I had a shoulder holster



Lauren Bacall and
Humphrey Bogart in
Dark Passage

made to keep it eye level, which was developed at Warner Bros. It was a real shoulder holster that held the camera at eye level and then the operating cameraman walked as the man walked. At first I thought how simple, just have a man stand and do it all. When I did my test it looked as if the shoulders were much too broad so I ended up in that film having two men being the two arms: one man was the right arm and one man was the left and they were right up next to the camera. I even had three operators on one shot to keep the flow of continuity because I discovered we don't cut with our eyes as you cut in a normal film. Every shot was a problem, and instead of cutting I did whips. I whipped the camera, if we turn quickly, we whip, and I did the next shot to cut in on that whip. I developed that technique early because I discovered I had to pan and I had to get to another set-up and another location figured. So I did it all in whips.

CW: What was Bogart like to work with?

DD: He was a wonderful man. Very brusque on the outside, but his crust was very very thin. That was the surface he wanted people to have. I deeply regret his death. I have many warm memories of Bogey. He invited me up to have dinner with the novelist Sinclair Lewis. I gave Sinclair a word association test and at the end he said: 'I want to thank you, Mr. Daves.' I said: 'What for?' He said: 'I always thought I had a phoney concept of what was truly my home. I tell everybody I've finally found home because I consider myself inherently a Yankee. I thought it was a little bit of a fake, but I find out by this test that I wasn't faking at all. To find you're not a fake is a great discovery.' Bogey was much more of an intellectual than people thought. He liked writers; he liked discussing ideas; he was of course a dear friend of John Huston's. He was a complete professional. There was never a day that you came to work that he wasn't prepared and ready. Even if he had been drinking, as he sometimes did far into the night, it didn't seem to interfere at all with either his memory or his brilliance as an actor. He was good.

CW: What about the scenes where he doesn't actually appear? Was he always on the set?

DD: I had to time it very often to his voice, and he was

fascinated by it. Sometimes I'd say he didn't have to come today, but he'd say: 'Oh I want to, Del, I want to be there, I want to see what you're doing.' He was very interested in the whole project, so sometimes I did what we call a work track along with it to time it. He would do it to a track right there on the location and I would time the film to his work track and his voice. Other times, I started before the sun came up so I had the city to myself. I then wrote the narration to fit what I got. It was too exciting a chance to play with, so I didn't confine myself then to length of voice.

CW: *Broken Arrow* would be one of your favourite pictures?

DD: Yes, it was the father of the so-called adult Western. It was literally the first sound film to show the Indian as an intelligent human being. Up to that time they were all 'Ugh Ugh' Indians. When Jimmy Stewart said: 'What you are about to see really happened. The only change will be when the Indian speaks he will speak in our language so that you may understand him.' 'And so you may understand him' is the key to the film. I think we ended up with the public understanding the Apaches and all the American Indians as a result of it, because then they re-assessed Chief Joseph and all these great leaders. These were the George Washingtons of the Indians and it created a whole new attitude. Since then all films have been affected by it. It is very old fashioned today to get an 'Ugh Ugh' Indian.

CW: And you also try to go to the place where it happened, if it was a real story?

DD: I make every effort to get to it and, by the way, that doesn't necessarily mean the actual spot. I did a little Western called *Return of the Texan*, which Henry Hathaway was going to do but he had to go to hospital for a major operation and it was thrown at me ten days before I had to start, by Zanuck. I said: 'It's too big a budget for this little a picture. I think I'd like to make it for around \$500,000 or something.' And he laughed: 'The first time in my life a director's come in and said, I don't want your big budget, I want a little budget.' So I went to Texas where the story was laid. It had no pictorial value at all, flat, dull, dusty, nothing country. So I told the producer, it was his first film: 'I'll show you Texas, but in *Arizona* where it's flat. It has the Texas

feeling, but at least we have clouds, at least we have shadows; we haven't dust that just coats everything.' So I did. I found a place in Arizona which was the equivalent of the place in Texas. All of my films are done in high desert country, seven or eight thousand feet high. There's something special about the atmosphere. It's clean and clear – I love to shoot in the winter time. I did *3.10 to Yuma* in the winter. We had to break the ice for our horses in the morning, the buckets were frozen solid every night. It's in the morning you get your long shadows. I often set the cameras up in the dark. When I do a film I first scout my locations and where my camera spots are going to be. I take a square of red cloth, and leave these with a rock on it so that the next day the headlights will pick up my red flag and I set the camera up in the dark. On *3.10 to Yuma* the moment the sun rose and broke the horizon I'd be aiming right at it. We got beautiful long, long shadows. It's not possible to get that effect in the summer. Buddy Lawton, the cameraman, and I got together at the beginning and created a black and white image of the whole. I told Buddy I wanted to make a film without filling in shadows, I said I'd lived on the desert and I know what a drought is like. I said: 'We're not going to fill any of these shadows.' He said: 'You'll get fired.' I said: 'What do you mean?' He said: 'Well, on *On the Waterfront*, Harry Cohn was so furious with the cameraman that he refused to ever let him work with him again, because he could never tell who was killing who.' I said: 'Well, look, I'll design the film so you'll know who is going to do what to who but I want the blacks.' So I went to see Cohn and I told him what I wanted to do, and he let me go ahead. *Cowboy's* full of blacks too. It's a colour film full of blacks by design. Lawton and I have done several films together; I think six maybe seven, and we're very close and sympathetic about these things – boom shots for example.

I was a bit of a pioneer with the camera boom (you call it a crane over here) particularly in Westerns and so much so that I built my own. It's a six-wheel drive truck with the camera crane on it. As a matter of fact it was used all through the *Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad, World*. That was my boom that Stanley Kramer used. Other booms always had to be on an angle, but our boom goes straight up in the air like a telephone pole, and



you can figuratively shoot all round, and almost straight down without running into the truck itself.

Daves lining up a crane shot on *Cowboy*

So this allows me to do my boom shots, almost with a sense of music. The crew tell me I look like Toscanini directing an orchestra. I'm doing it by instinct half the time, slowly, slowly, but now soaring. If you do it that way, you do it according to feeling. I pre-plan some of it but some I do as of that moment while the action's going on. In Westerns you are controlled a little by the action. If the action speeds up a little more than you thought you have to create the action, emotionally with the camera at the same time. So the men all watch me when on the boom and I ride the boom right alongside the operating camera man: 'Look out, it's happening, now lift.' That's very characteristic of many of the shots that I do in the Western films. Sometimes I'll insert moments of beauty into a film that have little to do with the dramatic content, just because it's beautiful and the boom particularly is good for that purpose.

In *Spencer's Mountain*, for example, I wanted to create a link between the death of the pioneer and the land that he had found so I used a high crane shot. I don't like to arbitrarily work against a natural flow of action, but in that case I left the choir singing and panned and lifted away from the ceremony at the graveside. Perhaps one

person out of ten would get it, but that's what it was for, the poetic image.

I like the use of them for revelations of beauty, and for revelations of danger for that matter. As far back as *Broken Arrow* I tried to combine a man like Cochise, Jeff Chandler, with his visions in one shot, without arbitrarily panning. A good way to do that, for example, would be to stage the scene so that you had a fine profile of the man in a very close shot. One of his messengers rides in the background and that carries the camera down a hill, and there, for God's sake, is the enemy.

You link the antagonist and protagonist in one shot and with a movement, but I like it to be dictated generally by story flow. I much prefer the audience not to know that there's a director. That's my general thesis in regard to directing.

The Use of Extracts in Film Teaching

Daniel Millar

The increasing interest in film teaching in schools and in further education has led to a great availability of materials, including extracts from feature films, usually selected by, and rentable from, the British Film Institute. Most of these are 10–20 minutes in length, and a substantial minority are beginnings or endings of films, or else sequences, like the Odessa Steps extract from *Battleship Potemkin*, which have a unity in themselves. Even so, it is desirable that the teacher using an extract should have seen the whole film, though occasionally he may decide to put himself on a level with his students and work 'blind' on an extract from a film he does not know. Even when he knows the film well, he should confine most of his discussion to the extract itself, if only to avoid the just irritation of the students. But anyone who has used practical criticism methods in teaching literature will be familiar with the problems and will have evolved his own ways of meeting them.

Extracts have been used in many different approaches to film teaching, so a broad distinction should here be made between the contextual method and film teaching in the stricter sense. The first uses film, among other illustrative materials, to teach a broader subject such as Social Studies or English or General Studies; and it has become associated, by over-simplification, with Kingsway Day College (now Kingsway College of Further Education), where much of the pioneering work was done, not only with this approach, but also in film teaching proper. The second type treats film as a subject in itself or in association with other media, such as television or perhaps drama. And it is in this area that the extract, as a teaching tool, seems to be on the decline in popularity and prestige just when considerable efforts in negotiation with film distributors have at last made a wide and varied range available. So the main purpose of this article is to suggest that the extract, despite real limitations,

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still has considerable value in film teaching, and should not fall into disuse.

First, why the decline? One cause may be the increasing emphasis on the work and personality of the individual director, deriving from the *politique des auteurs* of *Cahiers du Cinéma*, the originality of which consisted mainly in treating certain American directors at least as seriously as European *auteurs*. Another may be the greater interest in genres which has accompanied this re-discovery of American cinema. For both these approaches the whole film, as exemplar of style or type, is clearly preferable to the extract. At the same time, other approaches, for which the extract was more obviously useful, have declined from their formerly central positions. These are the 'grammar of film' method, which analyses technical elements separately to build up a fuller 'appreciation' (itself a dated word) of the sum effect; and the historical method, which shows the development of the medium from Lumière to Godard. Both these can, perhaps must, use extracts to make specific points or just to cover the ground.

The new orientations away from grammar and history to *auteur* and genre seem to me improvements both critically and pedagogically, and roughly parallel well-established developments in teaching literature – in fact Dr. Leavis might be surprised to find that his is the most commonly quoted name in current theoretical discussion, though not much of this has so far filtered into print. Extracts can still have a use in *auteur* and genre teaching, as well as in other ways, and the rest of this article will outline, with examples, what these are.

First the *auteur* approach. This assumes that one man, the director, is responsible for the total effect of a film, e.g. that the merits and defects of *Torn Curtain* are attributable to Hitchcock rather than to Brian Moore, the sole credited scriptwriter (or Paul Newman and Julie Andrews either). Examples are legion, especially in French, and almost any issue of *Sight and Sound* will yield one discussion of a director. The method may be described as 'admiring explication': a good full-length instance is Robin Wood's *Hitchcock's Films* (Zwemmer, 1965); and my own essay, 'Godard's World' (*Screen Education* No. 38, March/April, 1967), indicates its orientation even in the title. Teachers of literature will find this mode of criticism almost dangerously congenial and easy to handle, but provided they are aware of, yet not

overawed by, the complexities of the film-making process, no harm will result. In fact, young people who accept that somebody wrote a poem or story are remarkably unwilling to believe in any controlling hand behind a piece of film or television, no matter how extended the credits. So even over-emphasis has its initial virtues.

Three obvious uses of the extract in *auteur* teaching are:

1. To introduce or revise a full showing of a film. Since discussion will spread out from the extract or focus more sharply into it, both the film itself and the chosen part should be rich in significance, and a middle section is better than a beginning or ending. The best examples I have used are Buñuel's *Los Olvidados*, Lang's *The Big Heat* and Wajda's *A Generation*. Within English cinema, Schlesinger's *A Kind of Loving*, Clayton's *The Pumpkin Eater* and Anderson's *This Sporting Life* are also viable, and, on a different tack, can be used in conjunction with extracts from the original novels.

2. To show the variety or development in one director's work. Here again the extract is supplementary to the showing of a whole film. Convenient pairs might be Wajda's *A Generation* and *Ashes and Diamonds* or Antonioni's *L'Avventura* and *L'Eclisse*. These are oddly parallel examples in that each can be worked both ways (in fact, there are two extracts from *L'Eclisse*, the beginning and the end), each starts and finishes a trilogy, and each instances a development from realism to baroque which is arguably growth or decay (or, to be boringly uncontroversial, simply change). In working out such not-so-easy problems in the classroom, a teacher may learn much about his student's tastes and temperaments and something about his own.

3. To quote in single lectures or short courses where the director's work is already well-known. This is more appropriate to adult or extra-mural teaching, where the group is self-selective, than in schools or further education. It might be made to work for a few directors, such as Hitchcock and Ford,¹ who recur on television as well as in the local cinemas; but it is best to sound out the ground first, and anyway this is not a game for beginners.

These three ways with *auteur* criticism are not exhaustive, since they exclude comparison, one of the most fruitful extensions of the directorial approach, as I hope to show later. Once again, any literature teacher who uses both set books and comparative practical criticism will find the

analogy obvious enough, especially if he has started off by clipping out excerpts from the prescribed texts for preliminary practical criticism exercises.

Next, genre cinema, a topic too large and controversial, as well as fascinating, to deal with properly here. Genre is traditionally associated with American cinema, particularly the Western, the Gangster, the Musical and, possibly, the War film. The distinguishing feature of a genre is that it operates within a set of conventions, evolving yet recognizable, which create audience expectations within, or sometimes against, which the film works. Each genre has a virtually distinct history, and the flexible interplay between the formal requirements of a genre and the personal vision of an individual director offers very rewarding study. While this is best done with whole films where possible, extracts can help to summarize the history of a genre and to make individual points effectively.

Take, for instance, the sharp contrast in the use of violence between Ford's *Stagecoach* and Anthony Mann's *The Man from Laramie*, impersonal in Ford, almost sado-masochistic in Mann. The characters in *Stagecoach* are readily recognizable classic types, even within the extract (the chase of the stagecoach across a salt plain by the Indians); and when Donald Meek gets an arrow through him, this seems as much a part of the ritual as Redskins tumbling from the saddle or the rescuing cavalry charge. But when James Stewart is deliberately and vengefully shot through the gun hand, we feel the pain and see the blood (like most modern Westerns, *The Man from Laramie* is in colour, so blood is bright red rather than dark grey). There is also some psychological analysis of the bad guy, the spoilt and petulant son of a domineering father, before the extract ends with his being shot by a fellow gun-runner. Mann's fascination with the rocky landscape of the West emerges in the opening gunfight, which is comparable with the final gun-battle in *Winchester 73*; but Mann's tendency to the baroque and grotesque is more marked in *Man of the West*, with its peculiar divisions of loyalties, ghost town shoot-up and bizarre rape of Julie London by Lee J. Cobb.

This baroque development in the Western, which appears also in Arthur Penn's *The Left-Handed Gun*, reached an early high point in Nicholas Ray's *Johnny Guitar* with its sado-lesbian overtones and strange use of colour (for instance, red is dominant in the extract, compared with the usual

greens and browns of the West). Some French critics admire it, and Godard's character Pierrot le Fou sent his housemaid to see it because it was 'good for her education.' Certainly it exemplifies a Western so personal and even eccentric that it ceases to be more than nominally a genre film just as the same director's *Party Girl* can hardly be helpfully described as a Gangster film.

At the other end of the scale, even the extract from Delmer Daves's near-documentary *Cowboy*, which is concerned with painstaking evocation of a setting and a style of life, has its bizarre touch in the unexpected death by snakebite resulting from a practical joke. But at least Daves is consistent in that tragedy arises naturally out of the desert fauna, whereas the monsters of Ray and, to a smaller extent, of Mann are within the mind. It may be useful to discuss with students whether the so-called 'Psychological Western' is a necessary and inevitable development (if only because of TV Westerns) or a distortion of classic form.

The Western is immediately recognized by any age of student; whereas the gangster film is a hazier genre, shading off into other films of crime like murder mysteries and even the spy film. Nowadays young people may be more familiar with the half-hearted reconstructions of *The Untouchables* than with the occasional Cagney or Bogart movie that crops up on TV. Perhaps the issue is further complicated in that the hero-figure may be a gangster or reformed criminal or alternatively an investigator, such as a policeman or a private eye. In fact, this almost exactly parallels the Western; but it creates a greater problem, because the setting in place and in time is more flexible in the gangster genre. So it is helpful to start with three extracts which suggest the ethos, style and a little of the history of the type, namely *Little Caesar*, *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Harder They Fall*. The first shows the odd mixture of theatricality and abrupt violence of the films made when Prohibition and the big gangsters it produced were still contemporary. The second, more sophisticated in style and dialogue, belongs to the private eye period of seedy offices and ironic wit; it features a comic and occasionally violent exchange between Humphrey Bogart and Peter Lorre. The third, *The Harder They Fall*, really belongs to a fringe sub-genre, the boxing film, which the director, Mark Robson, had previously helped to create with *Champion*. But the opening sequence, shot on location in New York and easily the best part of the film (before Budd Schulberg's earnest script takes over), evokes

beautifully the grimy grandeur of the big city, the tense excitement of fast cars, the sense of danger as tough-looking types converge at a dreary rendezvous, the training-gym, looking forward to easy and illegal money. The extract ends with the battered face of Bogart, an archetypal figure in his last film, lighting his cigarette with a characteristic tough-guy gesture.

These extracts are best followed by a full-length masterpiece of the genre such as Lang's *The Big Heat* (or possibly Huston's *The Asphalt Jungle*, if it is available). To this I would add Kubrick's *The Killing*, a taut and originally constructed homage (especially in its use of actors) to the genre; and also a more personal and unconventional homage, Godard's *A Bout de Souffle*. The extracts from *The Big Heat* and *A Bout de Souffle* can be used as introductions or, better, recapitulations. If they have to be shown on their own, some additional explanations may be necessary. For instance, the *Big Heat* extract shows Bannion (Glenn Ford) investigating at a wrecked car lot which, though evocative in itself, takes on added force when we know that he is looking for the men who planted a bomb in his car, killing his wife. Similarly, when Vince (Lee Marvin) burns a bar-girl (Carolyn Jones) with his cigar, this not only echoes the sadistic murder of Lucy Chapman earlier in the film, but also foreshadows the scalding of Debbie (Gloria Grahame) with a pot of boiling coffee. Yet the tensions and subtleties of attitude among the gangsters and in the exchanges of Bannion with the lot owner and then with Vince, are interesting enough to be worth analysing even out of context, and give some hint how Lang can infuse so much moral and human feeling into a relatively conventional though well-articulated plot. The extract from *A Bout de Souffle* is the opening of the film and shows Michel (Jean-Paul Belmondo) ditching a girl-friend in Marseilles, stealing a car, shooting a policeman on the way, stealing from another girl-friend in Paris, and finally re-encountering a third girl, the American Patricia (Jean Seberg), to whom he gives a smooth line of patter about the good life they could have in Italy. While this demonstrates Michel's cynical, anarchic side (as well as Godard's free-wheeling way of adapting the gangster tradition) it only touches on the romanticism of his essentially hopeless love for Patricia and of his equally hopeless imitation of the Bogartian tough-guy image in a hard, real (and French) world.

There is no space here to touch on other genres, such as

the Musical, or to say much about the thematic approach, into which it can shade, as in the war film – where one can even identify other national genres besides the American, such as British, Polish, Russian and perhaps Italian. Anyway the BFI Education Department (81, Dean Street, W.1) issued a useful pamphlet called ‘Some Suggested Themes and ‘Materials’ which groups extracts, shorts and features under a dozen headings. Another pamphlet, ‘Film Teaching Material’, lists not only extracts but also six Study Units, organized round such themes as War, Young People and Imprisonment and usually consisting of a feature and several extracts. These can be rented for a month or six weeks at a time, which allows detailed study. But they are often heavily booked, up to a year ahead, and it may be more practical to organize one’s own study unit on similar lines, even if this means hiring the feature on two occasions several weeks apart.

Besides the *auteur*, genre and theme approaches, there is a fourth way in which my colleagues and I at Lanchester College of Technology, Coventry have found extracts useful – as an introduction to a fairly protracted block of film study, which covered documentary and other types of film as well as features. It seemed necessary to have an introductory session on the ‘Language of Film,’ the way film works, while yet avoiding too grammatical a method and concentrating on directorial control. A recent list was:

Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein)
A Man Escaped (Bresson)
Ashes and Diamonds (Wajda)
The Maltese Falcon (Huston)
The Eclipse (Extract A) (Antonioni)
The Pumpkin Eater (Clayton)

This gave us three extracts loosely connected with war, one from a genre film, and two on personal relationships. These could be worked in several ways, but I shall conclude with only one example, comparing *A Man Escaped* (1956) with *The Eclipse* (1961), both extracts being the beginnings of the films.

The Bresson extract shows Fontaine (François Leterrier) being taken to Gestapo H.Q. in Lyon by car, unsuccessfully attempting escape on the way and being beaten up. Locked in a cell, he signals to the man in the next cell by tapping on the wall and talks to Terry (Roger Tréherne), one of the

three prisoners allowed the comparative freedom of exercise in the courtyard and having outside contacts which enables him to get pencil and paper, pass on letters to Fontaine's family and Resistance group and send up a safety pin with which Fontaine can undo his handcuffs, following instructions from his unseen neighbour.

Apart from a few sparingly used long shots to clarify the geography (or geometry) of events, this extract, like most of the film, is built on a series of faces, hands and objects, such as the gear lever which will signal the moment for attempted escape, the gun butt and clubs which punish failure (the actual gun shots seem almost irrelevantly casual, since we know from the title that Fontaine *will* live to escape, and from common sense that he can't escape *yet*), the handkerchief which mops up blood, and serves as a basket slung from the cell window, the handcuffs which confine and yet tap messages through the wall, the pencil and paper which communicate with the outside world (inevitably reminiscent of *Diary of a Country Priest* visually, though the function is different), the pin which creates the first move towards freedom.

This intense and equal concentration on faces, hands and objects increases the sense of place and of confinement within closed spaces – the car, the interrogation room, the cell – without resorting to the almost heavy-handed (by Bresson's standards) emphasis on opening and closing doors in *The Trial of Joan of Arc*. A particularly clear instance is the first escape attempt, where the camera remains within the car, focused unremittingly on the immobile yet completely expressive face of the other prisoner, while the external action is off in a corner of the frame, half-seen through the window. If this seems at first an almost self-consciously classical treatment of violence, it is immediately counter-acted when, still in the same shot, Fontaine is shoved back into the car and efficiently clubbed unconscious with a gun butt. He bows his head in a gesture both self-protective and accepting, a slight movement which suffices to tell us that his next attempt will not be quick and impulsive, but careful, long-meditated and, after this harsh lesson, successful. (This one shot also demonstrates very concisely how much the early Godard owed to Bresson, most obviously in *Le Petit Soldat*.)

The grey, documentary photography of the opening sequence sets a tone for the whole film, which we only

gradually come to recognize as an effect of austere and functional beauty. Perhaps this needs to be said explicitly, since it may not be obvious from the extract alone. The beauty of the film is not *only* spiritual or in what it 'says' about the human soul; it is actually present on the screen and in the sound track. But it is inextricable from meaning and expressiveness; no one is likely to say, 'It was a lousy movie, but the photography was good' (a form of reaction which, unfortunately, becomes increasingly meaningful as each year goes by).

The sound track is as restrained as the visuals; opportunities for conversation are occasional and brief. As the pictures are mainly faces, hands and objects, the sounds are mainly commentary (by Fontaine), sound effects and silence. Later on there will be rather more conversations, though not many, and even some music (a Mozart Mass) but not much.

Yet, in a sense, the construction of the film itself is as much musical as narrative. It works by repetition, variation and enlargement. The theme of isolation and self-sufficiency is beginning to be played against that of trust in others and help from them – apparently contradictory yet both necessary. This quasi-dramatic theme is echoed in the very texture of the film by the contrast between Fontaine's still face and his unflaggingly determined eyes (in an interview with Godard in *Cahiers du Cinéma* Bresson not surprisingly expressed his admiration for the art of Buster Keaton) or again between the face that gives nothing away to his captors and the hands which busily yet unhurriedly work away at the goal of freedom. Bresson picked up the latter visual theme in his next film, *Pickpocket*, giving it there a much more ironical but also obscure treatment, whereas *A Man Escaped* has a transparent clarity which makes it more successful as art and, incidentally, much more suitable for teaching.

Antonioni's *The Eclipse* begins with an almost self-contained episode, the end of a love affair between Vittoria (Monica Vitti) and Riccardo (Francisco Rabal), and it is this sequence, preceded by the main titles, which forms Extract A (Extract B is the famous 'documentary' final sequence, which I shan't discuss here). It makes its effect in two different ways: first, it is meant to have behind it the weight of the analysis of feelings in *L'Avventura* and *La Notte*, the two previous films in the trilogy; secondly, it creates dramatically the state of emotional and spiritual impasse which Vittoria spends the

rest of this film trying to escape from, temporarily or unsuccessfully.

Perhaps it is this double pressure on a brief episode that brings it close to the self-parody which some critics have found in it. Certainly it lacks the full creative freedom of some later episodes in the film (Vittoria's happier moments) or the experimentation of the final sequence: but its peculiarly weighted, almost ponderous, concentration imposes its own emotional discipline on the viewer, so that what on first screening seems boringly inactive becomes, the second time, almost too full of visual clues. These take two forms, what is seen and how it is seen – which at once differentiates this extract from the Bresson, where such a distinction does not consciously arise, even in the escape attempt shot just quoted. To put it another way, an Art Director would be very busy working for Antonioni and almost unemployed with Bresson. (This, of course, is only a way of expressing critical points for students, not at all a reference to the history of individual films, which would be far too technical, probably unavailable and ultimately irrelevant.)

Whereas Bresson showed an action, Antonioni is creating a situation, so that lack of progression is part of the *donnée*. Not that the scene lacks movement in any sense; Vittoria's nervously languid walking about the room is more than matched by the camera's fluid searching for fuller information and varied compositional relationships – the dolly shot is as essential to Antonioni's style as it is startling in Bresson's, e.g. Joan's walk to the stake in *The Trial of Joan of Arc*, brilliantly re-echoed by Marie's night walk in *Au Hasard Balhazar*.

This is one reason why, though much of the meaning is carried in both extracts by objects, faces and stillness, Antonioni's is quite different in effect from Bresson's. There are other reasons. First, Giovanni Fusco's sombre, powerful music over the credit titles (themselves plain white on black, yet elegantly modern) sets a mood even before the opening shots give it a specific reference. Secondly, objects are not isolated but cluttered in the spacious (though in an emotional sense also cell-like) room, which gives an impression of expensive luxury. Riccardo is a left-wing intellectual, perhaps an editor or publisher (maybe even a writer, like Giovanni in *La Notte*) but he lives in a richly modish style. Thirdly, Vittoria herself is, in the opening sequence, a beautiful and expensively dressed decoration. Like the other

objects, she has a degree of independence and self-sufficiency; she is capable of motion within a tethered range, but so is the whirring fan that precedes her restless pacing.

Whereas Bresson uses things to express human purpose, need or frustration, so that they take on spiritual significance through function, Antonioni shows things as apart, indifferent or only expressive of mood (e.g. the over-flowing ashtray). Indeed, people sometimes seem at the mercy of things, like the mushroom tower which appears when the curtains are drawn back – students quickly spot the phallic overtones, but it is also threatening in its dominance and in its echo of the mushroom cloud which overhangs modern life. Similarly, the cluttered books and *objets d'art*, though individually expressive, are cumulatively encroaching and chaotic, as if Riccardo is overwhelmed not so much by possessions as by his education, by ideas and abstractions, so that he falls back on cliché in matters of feeling – he is virtually saying: 'If our love has died, let's get married!' (The analysis of sentiment here, while thoroughly Italian, has almost a Lawrentian ring, though the negative side of Lawrence.)

Another point of apparent similarity and actual divergence between Bresson and Antonioni is their fondness for setting a human figure against a bare wall. Why are the results so different that they hardly even seem comparable? Again, it is partly the difference between 'action' and 'situation.' Whereas Bresson's figures are actively expressing a state of soul in very specific terms through interior monologue, Antonioni's are either silent or vaguely attempting to communicate some general comment on a state of mind. The difference is also partly in lighting and subjects. Bresson's walls are grey and drab, Antonioni's are dazzling white (or, in later films, a striking pastel colour). Clothes look second-hand in Bresson, highly fashionable in Antonioni. Bresson's people are interesting-looking, while Antonioni's are good-looking. Feelings harden in Bresson, but deliquesce in Antonioni.

Perhaps one can hint, even on the basis of these two extracts, why Bresson is ultimately a greater and more cinematic director than Antonioni – certainly a more classical director, whereas Antonioni's apparent intellectual toughness in the analysis of emotions comes closer to sentimentality and fashionable cynicism.

No one could be less world-weary than Fontaine, who is

highly aware of and responsive to human contacts, ties and responsibilities. He is essentially an agent, whereas Vittoria and Riccardo, as translator and editor (or whatever), are at one remove from first-hand experience. Compare Riccardo and Fontaine as each slumps wearily in a scruffy shirt. Clearly Riccardo is the more pitiable, yet it is Fontaine who has blood on his face, handcuffs on his wrists.

All this, of course, makes Antonioni a more *modern* director, and not only because he is portraying the present and Bresson, the past. Bresson is no less interested in spiritual states, but ties these closely with a *plot*, a straight line of action off which the reflections develop – a plot perhaps more Aristotelian than Hollywoodian, but none the less perceptible. With Antonioni the plot is minimal and mood becomes paramount – even more obviously in his next film, *The Red Desert*, though in *Blow Up* he returned to plot and strict form, so that it might be argued this is *structurally* a more classical film than its four predecessors. Rather than follow through this slightly specious point, I would conclude by suggesting that Bresson's most recently shown film, *Au Hasard Balhazar*, makes a far more profound and shocking comment on modern life than anything Antonioni can find in Swinging London.

I have deliberately taken these speculations well beyond the limit of what one can normally attempt in the classroom. In doing so, I hope to have suggested that the extracts can provide a springboard as well as a locus for analytic comparison. At the more mundane level where we usually work, while awaiting the days of the Film Tripos and the Honours School in Cinema, perhaps the modest claim that relatively unsophisticated students will find a short extract easier to assimilate than a whole Bresson or Antonioni film may seem more realistic. If so, this only emphasizes the wide range of possibilities for the use of extracts in film teaching.

Of the films mentioned in this article, extracts are available (through the British Film Institute Distribution Dept., 43142 Lower Marsh, London S.E.1) from the following:

<i>Battleship Potemkin</i>	<i>Foreign Correspondent</i>
<i>Los Olvidados</i>	<i>Stagecoach</i>
<i>The Big Heat</i>	<i>The Man From Laramie</i>
<i>A Generation</i>	<i>Cowboy</i>
<i>A Kind of Loving</i>	<i>Little Caesar</i>
<i>The Pumpkin Eater</i>	<i>The Maltese Falcon</i>
<i>The Sporting Life</i>	<i>The Harder They Fall</i>

L'Avventura
The Eclipse
She Wore a Yellow Ribbon
The Informer
Two Rode Together

The Big Heat
A Bout de Souffle
A Man Escaped
The Trial of Joan of Arc

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REFERENCES

¹ Seven Ford extracts are available (including two from *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* and they run from *The Informer* (1935) to *Two Rode Together* (1961), a fair span. Of the four Hitchcock extracts, only one *Foreign Correspondent* is familiar, so their usefulness is limited.

Film in English Teaching

George Robertson

Approaches

The appearance in *English in Education* Spring 1968 of Daniel Millar's article entitled *English and the Use of Extracts in Film Teaching*, together with my review of *Growth through English*, and Mr. Bryan's quotation from a report of a talk I gave to LATE, put me in implicit dialogue with Mr. Millar. The issues are fundamental, theoretically and practically.

Mr. Millar speaks of the shift from 'grammar and history to *auteur* and genre (which) parallel established developments in teaching literature.' He mentions the analogy with using 'both set books and practical criticism.'

The film work at Abbey Wood, originated by Ray Bolam and developed by Jean Bleach and myself with the rest of the department, is designed to fit into a third context (which is John Dixon's concern). It is neither grammar – nor author – nor genre – based. The context of a teaching environment, the attempt to provide a cultural and social environment in which teachers will have to hand resources of all kinds, and can deploy these to enhance the individual pupil's encounter with experience. This assumes that analytical criticism and evaluation of literature or film is a special point of growth branching from a rich and informed awareness of the concerns of that literature. At Abbey Wood we are dealing with children of restricted experience and real poverty of reading, and we are teaching these children in mixed ability groups in the first two years. Training colleges, on another level, have analogous problems. The variety of abilities, the variety of the kind and pace of progress open to each student means that in group or class work we must always try to stimulate the language response which we look for, through as wide a range of stimuli as possible, and be ready to help and develop as wide a response. *Forum*

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Spring 1967 and Spring 1968 contain some notes on the general idea.

Film, like drama and poetry, helps us to select, and shape experience; what I take from a film will be limited by the range and relevance of the frames of reference I can bring to it, and the depth and intensity to which I can share its concerns. A teacher is, then, able to use a sequence of related 'experiences' to encourage sensitivity to a particular area or dimension of experience. To give an example – improvised drama round the theme of a boy in a market place gave a reference for the *Oliver Twist* film extract showing Oliver's arrival in London, his induction to Fagin's gang and his arrest.

The 'experience' of the drama and the film were developed in personal writing, and the particular lead out from this taken by individual children was further enhanced by reading recommendations – books like *Magnolia Buildings*, *Louie's Lot*, *Oliver Twist*, *There is a Happy Land*, *Joby*, *King of the Barbareens*, *The Red Pony*; all will follow on the interest of 'a child in trouble.' The teacher focused the class again with the *The Little Cart* poem, and helped to realize this further penetration into the experience of being alone, in a city, and/or guilty etc., with the film extract *Bicycle Thieves*. This extract invites recall of *Oliver Twist*, renews the notions of temptation, father-son relationships, and many other things which enable the class to divide again into individual concerns. The teacher here has access to a file of material and photographs, catalogued by themes, so that (where the child shows a particular response or readiness) poetry and stories which extend, or shift, the angle of vision can be offered to the individual. In this kind of teacher-pupil dialogue, a sense of common purpose and concern informs the talk. You teach pupils, not courses or authors.

The syllabus in a department which is trying to work towards such an end will not be a programme of work, but a body of material informed by the discussion of principles and practice which rises out of using the material. Involving film with other available resources must be done centrally, however, as it is economically impossible to cater for individual teachers.

What we do, therefore, is to hire a basic set of film extracts for each year group, and show them at intervals during a term: in addition, we show some full-length films. We hope to preview the films, and discuss related material, and the

teaching needs of the extract; classes view in groups of two or three classes together.

In the first three years we are simply concerned to establish a repertoire of film extracts which are of quality in themselves and which will interact with the type and level of the work generally going on. In the fourth and fifth year we include a film extract and writing about it, as an element in the CSE English Examination. We have had little opportunity to use film as I would like in a VIth form course, though a term's study of David Lean was done, and a study of Losey, sponsored by the BFI, is in progress. It is our experience that criticism of film as such will begin to emerge spontaneously when films of varied type, but on comparable themes, are juxtaposed (Odessa Steps extract with the Hungarian documentary, *Forgotten Faces*, for instance) and that quite sophisticated awareness of technique emerges. This is because of the way in which the work opens up content, not because any instruction in 'film crit' goes on.

Television and film are anyway a big feature in pupils' talk and experience, and we want to develop this with clarity, and depth of insight.

Recall of the detail of film is often extremely good, and the section of the class which is eager to join in is wide, and different from that operating most readily in other situations. You begin by having access to a fluent and enjoyable children's mode of talk ('Do you remember that bit when . . .?') and end with a painless induction into the procedures and modes proper to intensive discussion of literature. An account of the use of a variety of extracts will make more clearly points about some of the values they offer.

First Year Work

The sequence described above originating in *Oliver Twist* is an example of one type of film work done in this year. The short film *Between the Tides*, a study of the biology of the tideline, has been taken with the description of the Great Tide Pool which Doc investigates in *Cannery Row*, to offer a chance for intensive oral descriptions leading to the involvement of emotion projected into observed detail. This can lead to animal poetry (*Tiger, Snake*, a superb sequence in G. Summerfield's *Voices*) or to a class poem.

SEA ANEMONE AND PRAWN – a class poem

Sea anemone closed. A rosebud.
A dome, a jagged hole.
Waiting. Asleep.
Wrinkled waves gush, flow, hiss
Over the silt, the soft grainy sand,
Foaming over slippery rocks
And coarse crusts, grey and green.

As the water rushes over,
It opens like a bloodred chrysanthemum.
A bunch of bloodred snakes awakening from sleep
Squeeze out, quiver and waver.

A prawn, grey, glassy,
A flying ghost with invisible legs
Darts, jiggling, inquisitive –
Touches a petal –
Jerks, startled, shoots away
Into a groping mass of deadly eager tentacles . . .

Two definable values of film show up here: *Between the Tides*. A rich non-verbal common experience leading to detailed and extensive language exploration of this: all the words in the class poem were offered, savoured, discussed and selected against others by the class.

Oliver Twist: Exploration of Oliver's experience as communicated visually and through sound leads to selection and organization, not only of words, but also of the possible shapes and sequences of the story, written by some children from Oliver's point of view at great and loving length.

Both these extracts were followed, in fact, by sustained and wide participation in talk for some forty-five minutes. The stimulus derived from the extract on the sea led on to group theme work over a couple of weeks including some splendid displays of *objets trouvés*, summer holiday variety: the film was followed by *Seal Island* and *Man of Aran*, a powerful storm extract which, connecting with W. Macken's book *God Made Sunday*, led us back to people.

Second Year Film Work

I select from the Second Year courses another 'use' of film, which, I feel, illustrates also a point about the development of the children. During the year we must expect the maturity

range of the group to widen greatly – a number develop intense needs to explore personal emotional themes, and, given that they are often both shy and beginning to relate themselves to adult life, themes which can symbolize such emotions and also involve the children in a concern for powerful real life situations are useful. The children not only want to have these emotions touched, but often need a factual basis to help them structure their response. Pieces of writing on photographs of old people were followed by viewing the Granada TV film *Tramps*. Following this film, which gives a clear picture of a day spent chasing handouts round London, some children went on to work from *The Family Life of Old People*; others from poems such as, *The Hunchback in the Park*; while others chose to branch out more widely in looking at deprived people; reading and writing about the deaf, autistic children; tape-recording at an old folks' home, and so on. One group, illustrating well the principle that one 'reading' conditions another, took up the connection with *Oliver Twist* of a year back, and made a two-part play of the life of an orphan and her conflicts with the matron. I gave them the book *Second Hand Family* to read, and with this they had by then a rich store of experience to provide points of reference for further discussion, and poetry.

All this work depends on an intense awareness of the film, as film, developing.

Third Year Work

Mr. Millar's suggestions on genres I find difficult to place in any sort of school context – I don't know how keen I am myself to devote my own interests in film to distinguishing between shades of the Bizarre, Sado-machistic, and Baroque in the Western – but we do try to see how pupils react to films of similar subject and different genre: to compare Losey's *The Criminal* with *Men in Prison*, for instance, will inevitably create an awareness of the importance of the treatment, and of the film's assumptions about its audience. But the children have good instincts – what they saw and cared about was what happened to the people in the films, and, in comparing *Stagecoach* with *3.10 to Yuma*, they find no difficulty in distinguishing between the kind of pleasure one derives from film manner, as against the qualities in a film which direct us to a concern for humans and their relationships. It is not pompous of them to make the distinction: it is a pity to pursue the amusing at a length

and complexity so portentously 'academic' as some scholars of 'film crit' would have us.

I feel there is a lot to say about the damaging and dispiriting effects of 'analytic comparison' on undergraduates and students: many of them learn the hard way that academic criticism is of some value to specialists and really mature minds, but that before it is worth looking *at* poems one must look *through* them, look through the poet's eyes, define our vision against his; it is in meeting others that we meet ourselves.

I am not arguing for an emotional, anti-intellectual approach to film: I am arguing that sensitivity, clarity, and precision primarily develop through concern with human experience, and that, if this concern is intense, then we will distinguish the forms in which the insights a work offers are defined. I will illustrate this point by quoting from children's answers to a question on the extract *A Kind of Loving*. The sequence involved doesn't need explaining: the answers do that clearly. The question was *not*: 'Examine the director's use of' . . . anything. They were asked: 'Why does Vic look away from Ingrid when they are in the cafe?'

ENGLISH FILM EXAM

A Kind of Loving

When Ingrid and Vic were sitting in the cafe Vic's mind and vision begin to wander. Ingrid during this time continues to keep up a run of chatter about work and television programmes. Vic gradually becomes bored and looks over to a couple who had a few minutes before said hallo to Ingrid. The couple seemed really happy, looking into one another's eyes and only saying a few words between them. This seems to me as if this is wishful thinking on Victor's part. He wants to have this quit happiness with Ingrid but she continues to chatter about herself and other people.

Victor then looks over to a group of boys at another table. The boys were laughing about a joke. This picture of group of boys shows how free he wants to be, once again it is wishful thinking. Now he can actually imagine the thought Vic is weighing up in his mind, does he want freedom so he can go out with his mates and enjoy himself, or does he want to be tied down to one girl, get engaged and then married?

At this point of thinking Vic looks over to another table where two middle aged people were sitting. The couple seem bored with each other, and they have very miserable faces. The woman has her head on her hands and has a look of dejection as if someone has done her great wrong, supposedly lumbering her with her husband. Her Husband takes a look at her and seems to look away in disgust as if to say what's happened to the woman I married, she's turned into an old hag. Vic must now be imagining himself and Ingrid after they have been married for fifteen years. Would they be bored of one another? Would they still be able to talk to one another? I think it was at this point that Vic realizes he wants his freedom and even at this early stage thinks of giving Ingrid up? by Joan.

Vic looks away from Ingrid in the cafe because she is talking to much and when he looks away from ingird he looks at a group of chaps sitting together enjoyin them selv's and having a laugh, the he looks at a man and wife sitting to gether Not saying a word the man is Just sitting there smoking is pipe and saying nothing and the women is sitting their drinkin a cup of tea-coffy and stor-ing down at the floor also saying Nothing and in this part the director makes me feel as if runnig thouh vics mind was a group of fellows having a right old laugh No girls tieing them down then when he as a look at the marrid capel they are sitting their Gormless and Vic is probly thinking if I stay single I will be probly having a laugh and a good time with the boys but if I get marid say to ingrid I would probly end up lick that man and his wife sitting on that table over ther.' by Tony

It seems to me that both know something worth knowing about the use of close-up, and the cutting in this scene, but that they are rightly working *with* (not on) the film to develop their concern for what is happening to Vic. These were fourth year children, and the more able ones were able to relate this extract to readings of novels such as *Sons and Lovers*, *Catcher in the Rye* and *Death of the Heart*, as well as to their own experience, as they did indeed in personal discussion. It was their personal stake in the matter of these novels that enabled them to distinguish that Barstow does not match up to Lawrence nor Keith Waterhouse to Stan Barstow, not a consideration of style, nor of genre: awareness of style is a product.

Comment

Our debt and gratitude to the work of the British Film Institute makes me feel very strongly that we must be careful not to encourage in our schools a generation of teachers teaching film as poetry is taught sometimes, through the analysis of those elements of poetry for which there are critical terms. I don't want to see course books containing sets of questions on standard extracts and a glossary of critical terms at the back (Film and appreciation? Viewing and discrimination? and Exercises in film appreciation?) I don't want to see a film Tripos either, until some of the philosophical problems hinted at in Mr. Millar's first pages have been clarified. If film is to be used at all, let it feed a dialogue between teachers and pupils and creative artists about matters of common concern. Don't let us, because we are caught in the 'O' level – 'A' level set text and appreciation pattern in English Literature, allow film to go this way too.

Surely we would be better occupied in getting accepted a pattern of assessment of work in literature and film which takes some note of how people really read and develop?

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The Chase

Kevin Gough-Yates

The Chase is clumsily edited and is not, in my view, as distinguished as *The Miracle Worker*, where Penn is able to use his theatrical approach to cinema to maximum effect, exploring the themes related to shades of society and the way in which awareness and knowledge are obtained.* In *The Chase*, similar preoccupations absorb him. Colour is added, though most of the film is dark, brightened by local areas of colour. He has a script almost unrecognizable in comparison with the stage play by Horton Foote on which it is partly based.

It is additionally complicated by its apparent multiple authorship. Sam Spiegel, the producer, Lillian Hellmann, Horton Foote, Ivan Moffat and Marlon Brando all appear to have had a hand in the script. Sam Spiegel has virtually claimed it for himself. He had in mind giving 'a blinding insight into the forces that lead to mob violence . . . for example Dallas shortly before the murder of Kennedy where a woman stepped from the crowd and, at point blank range, spat into the face of Adlai Stevenson. It was not an act of individual bravery, she did it as part of an emotional flood of hostility and believed she was giving vent to what the whole community wanted her to do.' The shooting of Bubber Reeves, by a character who is virtually nameless and has appeared throughout the film in a non-speaking role, totally secondary to the main drift of the action, reflects exactly this interest which Sam Spiegel describes.

Arthur Penn, in an interview in *Cahiers du Cinéma* December 1967, is again complex and rewarding in throwing light on the background of the film: 'I have the habit of asking authors to work with my script and make certain modifications. They accept, and integrate their ideas into my script, so well, that in *The Left Handed Gun* there was a true collaboration between the script writers and myself. This did not

* Penn himself was not pleased with *The Miracle Worker*.

happen in *The Chase*. The subject matter was written by Lillian Hellmann, but beyond a certain point, she did not seem able to finish it and I had to intervene, and I found myself adding to her work to form the end of the film: the big scene in the car dump, and the murder at Kennedy Airport. For the rest of the film I had to count exclusively on the script which she had written, so much so that *The Chase* was not truly one of my films. . . . At one point the producer Sam Spiegel called upon someone else to rewrite it despite all that she (Lillian Hellmann) had done, but we had already started filming . . . one day we had a small piece of script from Lillian Hellmann, another day something written by Horton Foote, another bit of work by Ivan Moffat and sometimes passages written by Sam Spiegel himself. . . . Brando wanted certain changes made to his role. . . .’ This, taken with the role of the technicians who ‘filter ideas until the idea itself disappears’ has led Penn to the modest view that, in the end, *The Chase* ‘became a Hollywood film’ and not ‘a Penn film.’

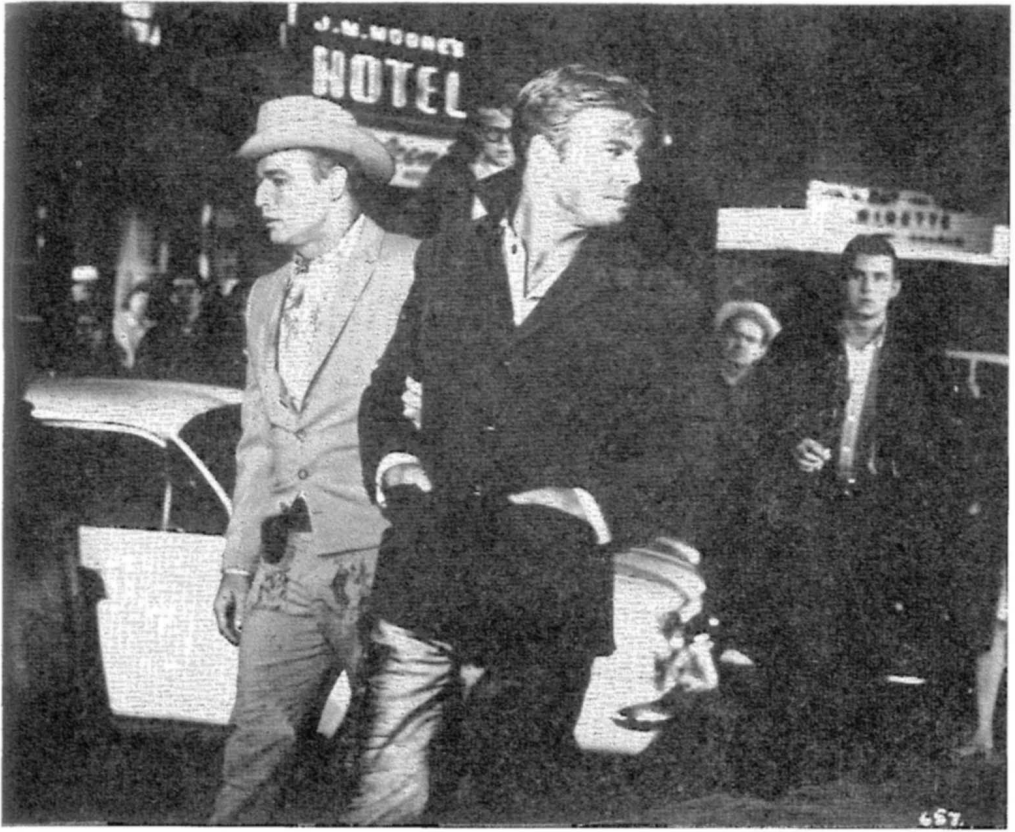
The film is further complicated by its intricate structure and characterization. The separate groups of persons that appear as central to the development of *The Chase* do not come together until the *tour de force* in the breakers’ yard as the end of the film approaches. The wealthy, the young, the innocent, the middle class and Calder do not link together in the film, until the scene which culminates in the explosion of the petrol pump and the killing of Jake. The ‘white man’s business,’ to which the negro woman at the opening of the film refers, has its logical culmination in catastrophe. The links between the three Saturday night parties, of Val Rogers, of Damon and Mary Fuller, and of the adolescents next door, are not immediately clear, except at the crudest level of social description. This, too, only emerges towards the end of the film, as the whole town, including Calder, are seen as elements of the same money-based and spiritually ignorant society: some are exploiters and some are exploited.

The characters themselves are not the simple stereotypes of Lang’s *Fury*, with which *The Chase* has obvious connections. All have the appearance of social respectability, the easy image of good manners, cultured gentility, or of simple respect for the law. All are self deceived – Briggs, the estate agent, Val Rogers, the Stewarts, the Fullers and Mr. and Mrs. Reeves. Even Sheriff Calder is not an uncorrupted figure in the community and deceives himself, like the rest of the characters, that he is above their intrigues, their

violence and their sexual degeneracy, not suspecting that he is one of its victims, a person like Lester or Bubber. The point is aptly made when Calder rescues Lester, the negro, from a possible lynching. Calder angrily turns on Damon Fuller: 'Why don't you crawl back into bed with your friend's wife' and receives the reply that points the parallel: 'And you go back to Val Rogers's party and kiss his hand or something.'

The film is undeniably central to Penn's development. Similar motifs are apparent in *The Left Handed Gun*, *The Miracle Worker*, *Mickey One* and *The Chase*. The use of light as a symbol of knowledge, direction and bewilderment and as a symbol of that which contains the truth but blinds and confuses, is as noticeable here as in Penn's other films. The film opens with the blazing lights of an approaching car and two figures darting away from their searching beams. Bubber Reeves follows the light, first in the meat carriage in which he is escaping, later to the sign that says 'Val Rogers Properties' and to the house from which he steals food. And it takes him 'home.' Calder himself seems to offer something of 'the light' as he talks to Anna and Jake outside the jail when the light is bright behind his head. In the remarkable sequence prior to the explosion as he tries to rescue Bubber, he flashes a torch to indicate the way out: 'Can't you see my light' he calls to no avail. Similarly, the death of Bubber, though modelled on the killing of Lee Harvey Oswald, resembles the deaths of Billy the Kid in *The Left Handed Gun* and of Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow in *Bonnie and Clyde* – the people stand round the dead figure, his life already shrouded in myth. On these grounds alone, *The Chase* can be regarded as a Penn film, but the notion of 'debt' which plagues *Mickey One* and *William Bonney*, also runs through *The Chase*. Almost all the characters are in some way tied to the culture because of it.

More than his other films, it appears to be making a noticeable social description of the roles of wealth and violence in contemporary American society. Poverty seems to be a factor in *Bonnie and Clyde*, ignorance in *The Left Handed Gun*, but here the conscious exploitation of wealth as a weapon of power provokes the violence and loveless sexual escapades. In a real sense, it remains the Wild West, immeasurably richer, but just as corrupt. The extravagant party which Val Rogers gives on his birthday is notable for its vulgar display of sexuality and money. Mr. Siftifieu's gift of one million dollars to Rogers's college is made in order to dazzle people



with the power of wealth and to outdo another guest who has donated fifty thousand dollars. 'We Americans must lead the world's ignorant masses' is an ironic comment on their own condition and its stupid misuse of wealth. The children have to leave the county to obtain an education, but money will correct this. Similarly, the notion that 'money will buy everything' – even good health – is stated at the party. It is certain that Bubber cannot hope to obtain a reasonable lawyer without it and the emphasis on the need for money in order to obtain justice is another element which dominates the film. The girl at the end who says: 'Perhaps he can hire my Daddy' and Mrs. Reeves's repentant gesture in determining to sell the house to hire a good lawyer are significant. Important too, is the role of money in attempting to buy friendship and work.

Bubber Reeves being
led back to jail

The style and composition, which looks as if it came directly from the stage, has also to be understood; likewise, the curiously mannered role of Mr. and Mrs. Briggs and Bubber

Reeves's parents. Again Penn himself has something to say here: 'For me, the future does not lie on the side of *cinéma vérité*. I often see it going in the opposite direction, towards a controlled image, towards the Greek theatre.' The bizarre scene as Mrs. Reeves leaves the Jail screaming that Val Rogers is Calder's master, looks as though it is taken directly from the stage. In fact, like almost everything in the film, it is not to be found in the stage play at all. Briggs, like part of a Greek Chorus, comments on the play itself and moves from scene to scene; always looking on, always outside the drama. The crowd watches passively as Ruby Calder calls for help. People communicate more satisfactorily by whistling, by touch or by signs.

Every major character, with the exception of the innocents, Bubber and Anna, seems to be a combination of apparent respectability and latent corruption. Briggs, the estate agent, a 'law abiding citizen' as he describes himself to Calder, is the first to see the opportunity to make money from the misfortunes of the Reeves's. He offers to buy their house so that the money for a lawyer for Bubber can be raised. He calls out to Damon Fuller and his friends, who are about to beat up the Sheriff, that 'hitting the Sheriff' is against the law, but gets a vicarious interest from it. He goes to the cell where Val Rogers beats the information about Bubber's whereabouts from the negro, Lester, but does nothing to restrain him. He slips out slyly when the beating finishes and, when Calder reappears, barely able to stand, he, like others in the town, watches passively and declines to help.

Val Rogers is a self-styled God, all powerful on account of his wealth and feared for his wrath. As Jake says of him when a team drill fruitlessly for oil: 'When my father smells oil, nature repents, and when the oil flows, and flow it will, my father will be here with a bonus for everybody.' It well indicates the only way in which he can show gratitude or affection – an ostentatious show of benevolence. The gift of the green dress to Ruby Calder, the obtaining of the Sheriff's job for Calder himself, are gifts for which the receivers are expected to feel indebted. When Calder says that he does not have to answer his questions, he replies: 'You do, you are my friend, and I have been good to you and I would have been better.' Even his attempt to save Jake, when he thinks Bubber may kill him, is based on the exploitation of his wealth and position in offering to guarantee Bubber's safety and escape. But, in spite of the unsympathetic aspect of his personality, a curiously unhappy figure emerges; one

who is saddened that his son is not happy in his marriage; one who consciously deceives himself that they are happy together; a figure who looks for and needs friendship, but lacks the genuine response that is necessary to achieve it.

Jake, in spite of his love for Anna, is, in many respects, like his Father. He attempts to demonstrate his affection for Anna by ridiculously incongruous presents which, though costly, are inappropriate and cannot be used. He knows the value of money for buying 'justice' for Bubber. He has married badly, a marriage of convenience, and both he and his wife have a certain sympathy with each other, as well as a distaste for their moral obligations to their elders. He has mixed feelings over helping Bubber, because he is afraid of losing Anna.

Even Calder and his wife, who are, apparently, the citizens of the town, are victims of its perverse nature. Calder has accepted the influence of Val Rogers to become Sheriff, while Ruby is not opposed to receiving expensive gifts from him. It is the continual accusations by citizens that he is in Val Rogers's pay, in some sense, that irritates him and obliges him to act against them. Edwin Stewart, the vice-president of Val Rogers's bank, accuses him of being more favourably disposed to help Val Rogers than himself. Mrs. Reeves unsuccessfully tries to bribe him and calls out: 'Val Rogers is his master,' which accurately indicates the worship of money that runs through the film. The accusation hits Calder hard. Though it is easy to think him above the town's corruption, it is clear that the emergent moral awareness he develops is only a response to the accusations which people unload on him. Val Rogers (in a well acted scene by E. G. Marshall) suggests at one point, when he is trying to glean information from Calder, that he has a duty to answer his questions because: 'I got you this job.' It is quite late in the film's development when the indolent, complacent sheriff adopts a position opposing the expensive presents that Val Rogers showers on Ruby. The dress has already been the subject of discussion. Calder, being unobservant, thinking that it is an old dress dyed green. His only regret when told its likely cost is that he lacks the same kind of money to purchase similar clothes for her. He insists on her returning the dress only after Edwin Stewart's verbal, self-pitying onslaught. It is an accusation which contains some truth, for the law is biased towards the protection of property. When, early in the film, Calder is ambling across the square and is

accused of operating laws biased towards the wealthy, he smartly retorts: 'You go and buy yourself an aeroplane and have someone steal it and I'll go and arrest them.' Calder and his wife are not immune to these cultural forces, although they seem sublimely unaware of them at the opening of the film. Calder suffers a cathartic experience that gives him a more sympathetic understanding of Bubber's position as Society's scapegoat, as well as the role he is expected to play in allowing it to operate its lynch law against known innocents like Bubber and Lester Johnson.

At best, the wealthy patronize the poor and are loved for it in return. Val Rogers has affection for only one person other than his son Jake, for Calder. But it is demonstrated purely at the level of Val's exploitation of his money and influence. Similarly, Jake's gifts to Anna, who is poor and deprived of her inheritance, are vulgar devices to buy her love. The relationships operate at the level of prostitution and naturally fail. Lester Johnson, too, knows his place in the culture. Poor, like other negroes in the film, he remains its willing victim. In contrast to the woman who drives past the escaping figure of Bubber in the opening sequence, he works in the centre of a disused car dump: the clearest metaphor the film provides for the culture in which it is set. The negro woman, however, instructs her son to turn away from what is 'white man's business.' This is both a prophetic comment on the film's development and a description of the function of law and prison in contemporary American society. Calder too, as mentioned above, owes all he has to the benevolence of his employers, ostensibly the county, but in reality Val Rogers.

There is a sense of self satisfaction about Calder at the opening of the film. His reluctance to answer the telephone; the way he handles the first people to goad him about the connection between him and Val Rogers indicate this. It only dawns on him gradually that he is living in a community that is like a madhouse. He refers to the 'nuts' who would like nothing better than to get their hands on somebody they thought had committed a murder. He shouts at Mrs. Reeves calling her: 'You damn crazy woman.' The whole town is not one that wants the law, but merely one that wants a legalized system for lynch law; hence the glee with which Damcn Fuller and his friends turn on Lester Johnson and the way that Bubber Reeves is knowingly used by the whole town as a scapegoat. He took punishment for Edwin

Stewart who was responsible for a theft; he 'took a rap' for Lester, and presumably for many others. Here he seems not only to be taking the rap for his fellow escapee, who has killed a travelling jewellery salesman, but also for Jake, who thinks that Bubber's reappearance will lose him Anna.

Calder's awareness that Bubber is an innocent, who will in all likelihood be murdered; together with a consciousness that he, too, is expected to participate in the rough treatment of Lester and Bubber, associates him with the victims themselves. Clear examples of this are in the beating up in which the sudden appearance of blood connects him with the murdered salesman. He is really a substitute for Bubber Reeves on whom aggression can be let out and Calder thereafter comes to resemble Bubber. This is especially clear as he stands beside him in the water after the explosion. The expressions on their faces are noticeably similar. They are both grubby and bloodied. They are both scapegoats of society. Penn's skill is seen at its height in the weaving of subtle patterns of this nature – the analogy between Lester, Bubber and Calder; between the Calders and Anna; between Jake and Val; between the differing age groups who all capture something from each other – and the contrasts between Lester and the negro woman at the beginning; between the use of light (normally in the form of lamps) and darkness and, perhaps most significantly, between the jail from which Bubber escapes and the 'jail' to which he escapes. Blue and red are colours that dominate the opening sequence as the two figures flee from their trackers, and the same colours dominate Calder's jail and the car dump. Another valid analogy is that of the town to a madhouse: Calder's screaming at Mrs. Reeves is a comment on the whole of the culture which believes that 'the world's ignorant masses' lack only money, his reference to the mad people out there ('Some of these people are just nuts . . . maniacs') who would like nothing better than to get their hands on someone they thought was a murderer, reflects on the culture's inherent form of ritual. It is no accident that Val Rogers is referred to with the reverence and fear of an Old Testament God. There is superb irony in Jake's line at the oil derrick: 'When my Father smells oil, nature repents and when it flows and flow it will, my Father will be here with a bonus for everybody.'

There is another obvious connection between all the film's central figures. No married couple in the film appears to have

children. In the play, Ruby is pregnant. Here she appears to be unable to have children. Calder's statement that he would be unprepared to bring up children over a jail cannot be lightly dismissed. The Stewarts, Calders', the Briggs' and the Fullers are all childless. Only Val Rogers has a son to inherit the prosperous estate which has been built. It seems as if the key figures are all sterile, unable to give birth to anything worth while. The children, in the form of Jake, Bubber and Anna, are unable to take advantage of the past, so systematically carved for them. Jake and Bubber are killed. Both those whom Anna loved are dead as the film ends. Val Rogers portentously announces to her: 'My son died at five o'clock this morning' as if he is referring to more than a child, more to the ideal which he has helped to construct. Only Anna seems to be worthy of having children and frequently refers to Bubber affectionately as 'Baby.' The 'baby' to Val Rogers is not Jake, but the model he is given on his birthday. It is the capitalist dream that is destroyed as they all flee from the holocaust. The explosion in the junk yard full of consumer products is entailed in society's structure, as is the violence which emerges in the party sequence at Edwin Stewart's which begins with a game and gradually becomes laced with violence until a gun goes off. This, of course, relates it to Val Rogers's party when drunken guests are dressed like cowboys and to the party of adolescents next door who play at 'hunting' Bubber Reeves immediately the idea is implanted in their minds. The parties are combinations of violence and sexual diversion.

Money, too, is related to the same factors. The drunkenness, sexual decadence and violence are all akin to the lust for wealth. The money which is given for Val Rogers's College for a woman's wing provokes the goading comment: 'You old goat, are you up to it?' The link between violence and sexual corruption is, of course, made during the angry exchange between Damon and Calder, when the latter rescues Lester from a likely lynching.

Anna and Bubber are parentless. Mrs. Reeves, aware that she has not been a mother to him, attempts to repent by adopting the conservative role of exploiting money. Anna is hostile to any suggestion that Sol is her father. Her Mother 'told me who he was and he's dead.' Here are the young who have been prevented from receiving their inheritance: cultural spiritual, and financial. Sol has appropriated her share of the business; Bubber has nothing to inherit. The dream of the prosperous America which the young will inherit is not for



Jake and Anna
arrange to meet

the 'lower classes.' There is an early reference to the 'lower classes.' Val Rogers is quick to point out that Emily and her friends cannot be counted as members. Though they feel exploited by him, they in turn exploit the real 'lower classes,' whose only source of wealth is held by the entrepreneur. Even the money for the proposed defence of Bubber in the courts is to come from Jake or from the selling of the only property his parents hold to Briggs a large holder of property already. Briggs has long coveted the house and is quick to take his opportunity.

The characters themselves are variations on each other. We have already noted how Calder develops so that he becomes temperamentally and visually associated with Bubber Reeves, and how Jake is, in spite of his love affair with Anna, a variation on his father. Nothing in the film is as revealing of Jake's character as the first time he appears by the oil well talking like a prophet, or the sequence where he meets Anna

in the motel and conceals his knowledge of Bubber's escape in order to cultivate his notion of love by giving her an expensive present. The parallel between the parties draws even closer connections and the whole disease of worshipping capitalist aspiration and values corrupts even the very young. They are bound together, secondly, by the role of money: its possible uses and its corruptive influence. The good uses are clear in the apparent aspiration, but its practical application is towards greed, exploitation, and the general perversion of all that The American dream promises. Its apparently inevitable corruptive power is clear in its ability to buy justice, education, health, prestige and, possibly, love. But money is in itself a violent weapon, used to exploit position and power. Everyone in the town believes that Calder has been bought by Val Rogers. It is a pattern that runs from the first sequence in which Calder appears, through to the violent beating up he receives from the respectable elements of the community.

The 'great society' passes nothing on to its young, because there are either no recognized young or they are dead. The adolescents in the party sequences emulate the worst elements in the elders, copying their sexual escapades and holding to the same gun toting myths. The sequences where the young talk to Bubber are all elements of the myth. By the end of the film he is being credited with crimes which are functions of the system transferred on to the individual. Bubber shows little anger at losing Anna to Jake: he sees it as a function of the system. Yet, as he is being taken back to prison, people point out that he killed Jake because of his affair with Anna. Interestingly, Emily points out that it is almost unbelievable. The tendency in the culture is towards adultery.

The main theme then, deals with inheritance – that which the older generation passes on to the young. This is why the film begins and ends with the two outcasts, Bubber and Anna; the former society's scapegoat and the latter the fatherless innocent, who is tricked of her share (in the form of her Mother's side of the business) and is prevented from consummating her love relationship with it (in the form of Jake). The anxieties over the Father's dream of his own son's future – in particular, the concern for his son's happiness and the process he adopts to achieve it, pursuing his paternal need by the exploitation of wealth – come to nothing. Calder and Ruby have not adopted children, because Calder refuses to bring up children over a jail (a metaphor for the culture).

The pursuit of wealth has become an end in itself and offers nothing to the young.

The enormous impact of *The Chase* is due to the way in which Penn has woven disparate elements into a complete climax. He never loses sight of its central aim, which is to explore the nature of inheritance and how the culture depicted has become devoid of anything other than lip service to its original aim of constructing a society which will (a) prove a desirable model for others and (b) provide something of moral value to pass on to the young.

Ironically, the only child in the film is the young negro boy at the opening who is told to keep his eyes on the road and ignore 'white man's business.' It implies an awareness of society's self destructive elements and the role which the exploited will play after the 'white man's business' has exhausted itself. Robin Wood has quite correctly pointed to one of the key elements in his book on Arthur Penn. Edwin sadly says: 'I wasn't thinking about myself at that age - the things I wanted and believed would happen.' It is the dream that has failed: a dream analogous to Val Rogers's as described by Jake, or to the vision of the guests at Val Roger's party. It refers to the hope of a new society for its offspring and to its total failure to provide it.

FILM CREDITS

director Arthur Penn, *producer* Sam Spiegel, *screenplay by* Lillian Hellman, *based on a novel and play* The Chase by Horton Foote, *play produced on the stage by* Jose Ferrer, *music composed and conducted by* John Barry, *director of photography* Joseph La Shelle, A.S.C., *production designed by* Richard Day, *art director* Robert Luthardt, *film editor* Gene Milford, A.C.E., *sound supervisor* Charles J. Rice, *sound director* Russell Saunders, *2nd unit director* Jim Havens, *costume designer* Donfeld, *set decorator* Frank Tuttle, *make-up supervision* Ben Lane, S.M.A., *hair styles by* Virginia Jones, C.H.S., *united production manager* Joseph M. Wonder, *main title* Maurice Binder, *filmed in* Panavision © Technicolor ©. *Cast:* MARLON BRANDO: Calder, JANE FONDA: Anna, ROBERT REDFORD: Bubber, E. G. MARSHALL: Val Rogers, ANGIE DICKINSON: Ruby Calder, JANICE RULE: Emily Stewart, MIRIAM HOPKINS: Mrs. Reeves, MARTHA HYER: Mary Fuller, RICHARD BRADFORD: Damon Fuller, ROBERT DUVAL: Edwin Stewart, JAMES FOX: Jake Rogers, DIANA HYLAND: Elizabeth Rogers, HENRY HULL: Briggs, JOCELYN BRANDO: Mrs. Briggs, KATHERINE WALSH: Verna Dee, LORI MARTIN: Cutie, MARC SEATON: Paul, PAUL

WILLIAMS: Seymour, CLIFTON JAMES: Lem, MALCOLM ATTER-
BURY: Mr. Reeves, NYDIA WESTMAN: Mrs. Henderson, JOEL
FLUELLEN: Lester Johnson, STEVE IHNAT: Archie, MAURICE
MANSON: Moore, BRUCE CABOT: Sol, STEVE WHITTAKER: Slim,
PAMELA CURRAN: Mrs. Siftisicus, KEN RENARD: Sam. 122 mins.
A Horizon Picture; A Columbia Pictures Release through
BLC.

Bonnie and Clyde

Jim Cook

With the exception of *Mickey One*, where Penn's complete liberty seems to have led him into overestimating what he could achieve, *Bonnie and Clyde* seems to be the film in which Penn has had the greatest personal and creative freedom. With a sympathetic front-office who left the choice of locations entirely to Penn, and a producer (Beatty), who had previously worked with and understood him, he was able more fully than before to realize his concerns. It is perhaps significant that, whereas in talking about earlier films Penn was always anxious to excuse certain scenes on grounds of producer interference, etc., or personal dissatisfaction, in interviews on *Bonnie and Clyde* he seems much more confident and talks in detail, not only about what the film means to him, but also about how certain effects were achieved. He mentions, for example, in the interview in *Cahiers du Cinéma* 196, December 1967, how Clyde's spasm of death was carefully planned in advance and shot with four separate cameras filming different objects at different speeds.

This confident control is evident from the opening. The clicking camera, which brings up the photographs of the 'real' Bonnie and Clyde over the credits, establishes concisely and iconographically Penn's approach. The photographs (documentary evidence), seem remote; today the real Bonnie and Clyde, who in much of their behaviour and particularly in their obsessive Kodak snapping, evidenced a desire to preserve themselves for posterity, are just faded snap shots in an old album. Then slowly Penn begins to infuse life into this dead matter – the stark grey of the titles diffuses into a deep red, and a scratchy '78' record is heard on the soundtrack. Penn is not reconstructing Bonnie and Clyde but actually *re-creating* them. Out of a past, which at first sight seems unlikely to yield up much, he re-creates them with contemporary modes of film narrative – quick, almost flip sequences, zestful pace with contemporary techniques – im-

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provisation, hand-held cameras, tele-photo lens, multiple cameras; and overall with a directness and honesty which is felt to be contemporary although it is in fact more personal to Penn.

After the credits the film cuts swiftly to Bonnie in her room – restless and cramped, she rushes at the chance to escape when she spies the Belmondo-like Clyde hesitantly on the point of stealing her mother's car. She is waiting, available and immediately aroused. The camera is placed at the bottom of the stairs as Bonnie, naked under her dress, makes her headlong dash down towards excitement, freedom and towards the audience.

Her first contact with Clyde is in the open air, next to a car. The car and the open air, where they finally make love and die, seem more appropriate to Bonnie and Clyde than any of the rooms (including Bonnie's room) which they inhabit. Rooms lead to the explosion of tensions, particularly between Bonnie and Blanche, or to their being trapped in them by the police. They meet Bonnie's family out in the open, where there is no chance of betrayal. At C. W.'s father's place there is an ambivalence: outside it is warm and open; inside is the hatred and meanness of the old man.

At their first meeting Bonnie jeeringly tests Clyde (to protect herself if his claims should prove false – like C. W., at first, she can't quite believe it): 'You wouldn't have the gumption' (to steal and kill) and initially she seems correct. Although he is the one focus of energy in the dusty deserted township which is Bonnie's home, it *is* difficult to take him seriously: the eagerness with which he goes to show Bonnie his foot minus two toes is funny because of the discrepancy between an obviously painful act and his own childishly proud attitude to it. He is not bitter about his prison experiences, but pleased that he was able to get out of a work patrol by chopping off two toes, despite the fact that he was released the day after the event.

It is this pleasure in his ingenuity rather than the objective nature of the act itself which is dwelt on and seen to be important. The process is one of dramatic irony, for, by emphasizing the distinction between what a character seems to be doing or saying, and what this reveals of him, we do not so much identify with the characters as know more about them than they do themselves. At this point, while we do identify with Bonnie, as the first character we see, and share to a certain extent her fascination with Clyde, we can also see

something of his nature and the reasons why Bonnie should need to escape from her arid surroundings.

Clyde's first raid, specifically put on as a show for Bonnie, is treated subjectively: i.e. from the point of view of their excitement. Main Street is deserted and Clyde causes no damage by firing into the air. It is the least real of their attacks on society but, because of the excitement and adventure it contains, it involves Bonnie further with Clyde – as they dash off in the car she cries out for the first time: 'Hey what's your name?' If, however, their outsider-bandit activity is seen at its purest, it becomes increasingly impure as other people are involved and injured. Their distance from each other is at its most impure in these early scenes.

Before the raid Bonnie shows a sensual curiosity about robbery especially in fingering Clyde's gun, and in doing so introduces that part of the relationship which is treated more dispassionately by Penn – their sexual and psychological rapport. From it, the tensions in the film develop in that, for both audience and protagonists, the fascination and excite-

'I ain't no lover boy'



ment of being robbers (identifying with and living the myth) is continually undermined by the strains in the personal-sexual relationships.

When Bonnie pounces on Clyde in the car, excited by the man he has proved himself to be, she is violently rebuffed by a near hysterical Clyde. His explanation ('I'm no lover boy, never saw no percentage in it') and the advice ('If you want a stud go back to your waitress job and the pawing truck drivers') are again examples of Penn offering information in quite a subtle way. At one level Clyde is ashamed of his sexual inadequacy; at another he deceives himself with the mystique of the *Professional* beyond physical needs. This latter is the explanation Bonnie wants to accept at first; different himself, Clyde flatters her by seeing something different in her. Later in the film, when this belief is not strong enough to counter the tensions of violence and flight, she turns on him with accusations of inadequacy: '. . . and your lovmakin', which ain't no kind of lovmakin' at all.'

Penn offers a synthesis of these two explanations for Clyde's behaviour. In such moments as his amazement that Bonnie can't feel alone with him in the group, his glee at his own exploits, his bewilderment when things go wrong, we see a man who is not so much sexually inadequate, but sexually indifferent: someone arrested at a narcissistic pre-sexual level of emotional development, where fantasy is as real as fact. Similar in some ways to Clyde are the illiterate Billy the Kid and animal-like Helen Keller. In all three the publicly violent behaviour masks an inner conflict, incapable of expressing or even knowing itself, which Penn reveals to his audience.

After the initial setback, Bonnie increasingly gives more of herself to Clyde. Accepting his estimate of himself, she accepts his diagnosis of her and lets him control her when Clyde, in the café, unconsciously parodying the gangster and his moll, says of her hairstyle: 'Change it, I don't like it.' The irony here is that neither is she a gangster's moll, nor does she get any of the obvious material benefits accruing from robbery with which Clyde tries to tempt her. Despite its initial attractions, the adventure is in many ways a regression for her and, at certain points in the film, she brings Clyde up against her reality – love for her mother and her man – a reality which Penn sees as being just as fantasy-ridden as Clyde's. Nevertheless, in the insults to his lovemaking, in her need to see her mother and the 'old' real life, and in her questions to Clyde at the end as to what he would do if they

could have their time again, there is ample evidence that her needs are not Clyde's.

Experienced sexually, if not emotionally, Bonnie brings Clyde a little closer to other people's dreams and aspirations. In a drab harsh world, she wants both adventure and security, and she is the extreme example of that part of the community (C. W. Moss, Eugene, Velma, etc.) which is willing to subsume its identity into that of the myth/legend in order to fulfil its fantasies. It is appropriate that she, who by her presence was so instrumental in the legend's growth, should by her poetry concretize it and arrange the way in which they will be seen by posterity.

Despite themselves, Bonnie and Clyde are unconsciously 'arranging' the legend. This is evident from the several scenes in which they come into contact with the social reality of Depression America in the Thirties. These scenes have a static quality: the poverty and degradation they depict being one of the social driving forces for Bonnie and Clyde, and the way in which they buck the system.

The early scene in which they invite the farmer and his negro helper to personally destroy what has already been taken away by 'Them' shows them assuming the power to offer the farmer the dignity of ending in a tangible direct way his connection with his own property. The bullets used here, as when a little earlier Clyde teaches Bonnie to shoot, do not kill; they are part of an attractive game whereby one spiritedly defines oneself against impersonal attack. Stating their vocation here for the first time: 'We rob banks' (banks the symbol of security and stability, but not obviously under the control of any one man), they give back to the farmer some vestige of his dignity, and, in doing so, distance themselves from him. There is no open gratitude from the farmer but simply an acceptance that Bonnie and Clyde can do this sort of thing.

As their plunder on society increases, so their emotional distance from it becomes greater: visiting Bonnie's family is a soft-focus dream bearing no resemblance to the realities of the situation. Towards the end, when they beg help off the wretched squatters, they are treated with the remote curiosity one extends towards alien beings.

In the opening sections little of this is explicit, although all the various strands of the film have been indicated and its style established. We have seen Clyde's excited illusion of

his own invulnerability, so intensely subjective that violence and crime are no reality at all, with a hint that his behaviour springs from arrested emotional development. We have seen Bonnie's desire to go along with Clyde to get out of a social and personal rut and fulfil her own fantasies, needing to convince herself all the time of the reality of their existence. It is she who most frequently announces them to people, with 'We rob banks.' Finally we have seen how they can become greater than the dispossessed people around them; how their revolt is in some ways a reaction against a sterile way of life, which in its flight from society's rules can offer lesser mortals a vicarious fantasy escape of their own. That Penn is interested in the almost religious quality of certain people to *redeem* the rest of their community is clear from his treatment of the legends which grow up around Billy in *The Left Handed Gun* and Bubber Reeves in *The Chase*.

Penn's narrative technique is to present short sharp sequences structured to set up the tensions between illusion and reality. For example, at the beginning of the film, we identify with Bonnie; we later share the exhilaration of the first raid; we draw back to observe their sexual behaviour. While identifying with their rush to freedom and excitement, we are continually aware that it is being undermined (for them and us) from within, just as effectively as it will be undermined from without by the police and later the implacable Hamer.

Within scenes or between them Penn strictly controls these tensions and in the interview in *Cabiers 196* emphasizes how important it was for him to control his audience's reaction so that 'the whole film can be permeated by an understanding for characters who don't understand themselves.' Thus an edgy nervous rhythm develops from these short scenes, filmed with the actors intensely involved, but, however, autonomous in themselves and linked rhythmically to the rest of the scenes in the sequence through the editing and music.

An example occurs just after the raid on the failed bank. Clyde, with only a dollar and ninety-eight cents, needing to get his groceries at gun-point is humorous; the fat man with the hatchet is grotesque, as is the stumbling clumsy fight; but the blow he receives on the head from the gun is serious, harsh and violent; Clyde's later bewilderment in the car as to why the man should want to attack him is again funny. The sequence remains in our memory and is recalled when, a little later, we see the grocer again: this time in hospital

bandaged (mildly funny), and positively identifying Clyde (potentially serious).

The choice of Michael J. Pollard to play C. W. Moss was excellent casting on Penn's part. The slack body, the amorphous face of a grown-up child with its incredulous glee when told that Bonnie and Clyde rob banks, all indicate a child who cannot believe that its dream has come true. When C. W. accepts them it is total and, at the end, his conviction that they will escape the law once again is superstitious, if not religious. Like Moultrie in *The Left Handed Gun* needs Billy the Kid, C. W. needs Bonnie and Clyde in a spiritual sense and it is appropriate that, just as Bonnie is a beautiful dream girl whom he idolizes (the tattoo is acquired at her suggestion), and towards whom he is always protective, never sexual, he should be a devoted fan of a contemporary screen dream beauty – Myrna Loy.

Before their first violent robbery, there is a short scene of the gang as it now stands: Bonnie, awake and restless; Clyde pretending to sleep though racked with his own secret fears; C. W. apart on the arm-chair, fast asleep and snoring. It is almost like a dumb show, setting the mood of the robbery, which is in crowded streets and in a bank which functions: the first of their more frontal assaults on society.

As in previous scenes, there is a humorous opening – Clyde shouting to make himself heard, C. W. jamming the car, etc. – is undermined by a violent contrast. In the escape, a bank-cashier's bloodied face slides down the window of the car – shot at point-blank range by Clyde.

This is a horrific image and after it, no matter how much we may want to subsume ourselves in the fantasy of exhilaration and release, it reminds us that an unqualified identification with the fantasy can never exist again, certainly not for us and probably not for the characters either.

After Clyde's initial childish subjective reaction ('Why'd he do it?') the discussion about their first killing takes place in a cinema where LeRoy's *Gold Diggers of 1933* (one of the few socially conscious Depression Musicals) is showing. In this dream palace, where normal society goes to indulge its fantasies, Bonnie wants to forget about the murder and concentrate on the movie, whereas Clyde is hysterically berating C. W. for his carelessness. Later, in their hotel room, Bonnie and Clyde are psychologically reassessed in the fiasco scene. Penn uses a restless hovering camera and improvisation from Dunaway and Beatty.

Clyde and Chuck
meet up



Excited by Bonnie's loyalty to him, despite the murder charge he now faces, Clyde attempts to make love to her, revealing his inadequacy not only in the act, but also in the furtive preparations he makes for it, clearing the bed, pulling down the blinds, etc. In accepting this and Clyde's admission ('I told you I was no lover boy, didn't I?') with a moving and simple gesture of assent, Bonnie commits herself now to far more than just adventure. With the fact of death and a definite psychological maladjustment in Clyde, the film moves on to its next stage – the co-opting of Buck and his wife into the gang. We now know that jokey folks can also be killers. Because these serious undertones have already been set up, Penn can now impose a domestic intimacy on to the tensions, as the gang attempts family normality, achieving at best a grotesque parody of it.

Buck, a back-slapping, corny-joke telling ultra-hearty, and Blanche, a near genteel hysteric, whose embarrassment (at being introduced to C. W. in his underclothes) masks a coarseness and avarice, might both be, as Clyde says, 'family,' but they can do nothing but exacerbate the tensions, doubts and fears which Bonnie is beginning to experience.

Again one can notice the contrasting scenes: the gang, together for the first time, take their mock-serious photographs and prepare to take a relaxing 'vacation' in the quiet, pleasant, leafy surroundings of their motel. Rapidly, however, relations between Bonnie and Blanche deteriorate, and they are then caught by the necessity to buy large quantities of

food, which alerts the delivery boy's suspicions. There are two interesting points to note here: first that, as in the later ambush, it is the ordinary human need for food which traps these people with super-human pretensions; and secondly that once again the edgy fraught mood of the motel scene presages the attack from without, which is violent, noisy and yet with a comic aspect to it – Blanche's hysterical clinging to the paint brush as she dashes to the car.

The seriousness necessary to complement this scene comes in the next sequence with the panic in the car. Blanche's disruptive influence on her dream and the disruption which the dream itself is undergoing force Bonnie out of the car, into the open, where she insults Clyde's sexuality. Her tearful apology parallels Blanche's squeals of sorrow to Buck about panicking.

At this point the central scene of the Barrow gang versus Society occurs. Society takes the form of Sergeant Frank Hamer, nominally of the Texas Rangers, but in fact a natural hunter for whom state-boundaries mean nothing. When bound and gagged and pushed out to drift on the lake, he does not disappear, but rather merges into the landscape. This final image of him suggests he is more of a force to be reckoned with than just a foolish figure of evil in the gang's Robin Hood fantasy, particularly since his contemptuous spitting at Bonnie, with its implied destruction of their status serves only to provoke Clyde into a further impotent gesture. Without his gun, he is left in a clumsy childish rage, thrashing knee-deep in water. The violence of his emotions, when personally affected completely outstrips any ability he might have to organize and control them and presents a strong contrast to his easy shooting when it is part of the game.

The montage of interviews with people who have seen and touched what seem to them to be folk-heroes leads into the one sequence where we see the gang actually enjoy their celebrity, viz. in the comic scene where they pick up Eugene and Velma. Fascinated, scared and proud of what they will be able to tell their friends, these two go along with the Barrow gang, soon revealing secrets like age and achieving the easy familiarity in which Eugene can object that his hamburger is not the one he ordered. Like all the others, however, this scene has its counterpoint when Eugene casually replies that he is an undertaker and Bonnie demands that the ordinary folk, with whom they have found it so easy to identify and joke, be dropped immediately.

Bonnie's disillusionment over her relationship with Clyde, her mounting irritation with Blanche's hysteria, her anger that Blanche is getting a cut of the spoils which Bonnie's family could use, all come to a head in her awareness of the implications of Eugene's social function, and the nature of his work. She disappears, literally merging with and losing herself in the countryside she originally came from.

Clyde chases her and a cloud passes over the land, setting the tone for the soft-focus scene with her family, illustrating the couple's relationship to ordinary people now that they are on the run, notorious and legendary.

Unlike the earlier scene with the farmer and the later one with the squatters, which are shot realistically as their legend rises and falls, here, when their fame is at its height, Bonnie's ideal of going home is seen to be a beautiful, impractical dream. The tight-lipped old lady, who is Bonnie's mother, points out to them they must now keep running to survive, and Bonnie herself accepts the failure of this dream. In their motel room, she tells Clyde that her mother is just an old woman and that he is now her life. Her deep love for Clyde is seen in a fine touch where, as she tells him this, she nestles chastely against him, covering her thigh with her dress. Thus far has she progressed from the randy assaults on him at the beginning of the film. Her last words before the ambush caused by C. W.'s carelessness, are a realization of the hopelessness of any fulfilment in the chase itself, but a confirmation of herself and Clyde as a unit going through with it together: 'We're just going.'

In this ambush nothing is funny; it is the inexorable intrusion of the reality of violence with Buck's head half-blown off, Blanche blinded, and the screaming hell of the car. After a moment's stillness in the beautiful transition fade/dissolve from night to dawn, the attack begins again. Whooping at what is for them a licensed, liberating bacchanale, the defenders of law and order shoot relentlessly at the car until it bursts into flames.

The sequence illustrates once again Penn's control over his audience's reactions. After horrifying the audience with the blood and noise, he boldly reintroduces the jaunty banjo music, heard earlier. There is no respite yet and, just as the characters have to see their actions through to the end, so also have we the audience. The now ironic music of exhilaration and escape carries the film to the passive resignation of the squatters' camp.



There the gang are peered at with disbelief, as though they were gods or religious relics. At the same time, they are offered whatever little assistance is available. As with the share-croppers interviewed after the bank-raid, they are accepted fatalistically without any sense of smugness at their having achieved their come-uppance. From those with something to lose, however, there is plenty of reaction, and the tensions between the interior and exterior of C. W.'s father's house, the hatred and the unctuousness have already been commented upon.

Approaching the end

Again the technique is to present the situation comically (the father's disproportionate protests about C. W.'s tattoo as he helps bring in the wounded Bonnie and Clyde), and then to undermine it as the father viciously attacks C. W. for having got only a tattoo out of the affair – no name in the papers, etc. Viciousness, deceit and sadism seem to characterize the out-

side world, which is drawing in inexorably. Hamer extracts information from Blanche, using tenderness, but leaves her to weep out her grief to an empty room when he has what he wants; Hamer and Morse senior are shown in close-up shiftily plotting against a background of Roosevelt New Deal posters; Morse urges on C. W. a vicious appeal to family – all these undermine Bonnie and Clyde's recovery.

Just as earlier in her simple poetry Bonnie had formalized any experience, now she formalizes their particular experience. The poem is printed; the legend is made; and, out in the open air, Clyde is able to fulfil himself freely with Bonnie. The success of the love-making stresses the return to normality of Bonnie and Clyde, but, because they are who they are, this new and natural tenderness and love is seen to be as impermanent as the newspaper containing their legend which blows away on the wind.

As open, free and direct in their love as were their assaults on society, they are no match for society's scheming, its devious machinery of retribution. In the town they look as fragile as the china doll and yet as plausible as the young man and his 'Gladys Jane' who decide that it is time to go home. We desperately want them to be plausible and we almost share C. W.'s belief in them when the sheriff's arrival turns out to be a false alarm. When, however, we see C. W.'s father, we know that all is lost and that the same implacable forces that killed Buck and Blanche will emerge from their camouflage and destroy them even more totally, with an even greater show of abstract force.

Taking an epoch of gangsters and gangster movies when society was examining its urban culture and the power-structure in it, Penn changes the emphasis by taking as his protagonists two 'gangsters' who operated exclusively in rural America, where the older ideas of individual freedom and an almost paradisaal innocence of opportunity still held vestigial sway against the onslaught of anonymous massive Corporation power.

In its debased form this freedom of opportunity is the rigid narrow-minded Puritan ethic of the Mid-West states where the urge to conform was and is great. Thus, knowing Penn's stated interest in both psychoanalytical drama and movements in society, one can, perhaps, see this film as either an archetypal tale of children who step out of the line of the accepted ethic and thus inevitably incur the wrath of

the father (Hamer), or else as a statement about revolt and the desire for action set in terms of today's acceptable myths.

It is more useful to think of Bonnie and Clyde as romantics, who, try as they might, can never achieve their ideal. From the evidence of this film, Penn emerges as a melancholy romantic, sensitive to opposing polarities (the dream, the reality; the interior world, the exterior world, examples of which proliferate. For Penn the much discussed use of violence is a means of expressing the strains and tensions between these urges.

He is not a documentarist, and he is not making a film like *In Cold Blood*, but, even within his own terms, he cannot be objective in so far as his own character puts him in sympathy with the active romantic spirit trying to break its bonds, and out of sympathy with the Classical passive forces of order and restraint.

The film pleads for sympathy and the innocent desire to get away from a harsh world of poverty and violence to find a new freedom. To escape Bonnie and Clyde need to use violence, but it is presented as a means to an end (they rob but never actually attack, etc.); whereas, for society to bring its charges down to earth, violence is central. Punishment follows the breaking of rules, and Hamer's 'real' world, for Penn, is full of malignity, even if it is not altogether motiveless.

The film is schematic, and yet Penn's ability as a director prevents this from being felt on viewing the film. The *experience* is tightly controlled and centres on the tension between our exhilaration with their quest for freedom and invulnerability, and our realization that it is all in vain: that the System will shoot down what it cannot contain.

The dream of being the big guy or of experiencing true love, although differing in their degrees of remove from harsh reality, are both for Penn ultimately unattainable fantasies; and fantasies of the innocent.

FILM CREDITS

director Arthur Penn, *producer* Warren Beatty, *written by* David Newman and Robert Benton, *director of photography* Burnett Guffey, A.S.C., *art director* Dean Tavoularis, *film editor* Dede Allen, *sound* Francis E. Stahl, *set decorator* Raymond Paul, *special effects* Danny Lee, *costumes designed by* Theadora Van Runkle, *special consultant* Robert Towne, *music composed by* Charles Strouse,

production manager Russ Saunders, asst. to the producer Elain Michea, script supervisor John Dutton, make-up created by Robt. Jiras, Miss Dunaway's make-up by Warner Bros. Cosmetics, Flatt and Scruggs 'Foggy Mountain Breakdown' Courtesy Mercury Records, men's wardrobe Andy Matyasi, women's wardrobe Norma Brown, hair stylist Gladys Witten, assistant director Jack N. Reddish. Technicolor ©, A. Tatira-Hiller Production, from Warner Bros.-Seven Arts. Cast: WARREN BEATTY: Clyde Barrow, FAYE DUNAWAY: Bonnie Parker, MICHAEL J. POLLARD: C. W. Moss, GENE HACKMAN: Buck Barrow, ESTELLE PARSONS: Blanche, DENVER PYLE: Frank Hamer, DUBS TAYLOR: Ivan Moss, EVANS EVANS: Velma Davis, GENE WILDER: Eugene Grizzard. 111 mins. Released through Warner Pathé.

Interview with Jack Gold

David Spiers

After leaving University College, London, Jack Gold began his career as a trainee studio manager in radio. He moved to the film department of BBC Television as a trainee assistant film editor. On completing his training, he worked on two new ventures – schools' programmes and *Tonight*. With the latter, he eventually became a director, doing three, four, sometimes five, short items a week. Later he directed full-length documentaries, adaptations, and a Wednesday Play. As a free-lance director, he made films for ATV and Rediffusion. In 1968 he made his first feature, *The Bofors Gun*. His second film, *The Reckoning*, is in its final stages of production and will be appearing shortly.

DS: What value do you think your television experience has been in terms of working in the cinema?

JG: It was like a pressure cooker. I became used to almost any surprise. I did, I suppose, three to four hundred short films for the *Tonight* programme and about thirty documentaries, as well as fictional pieces, over a period of maybe six years. This was apart from the valuable editing experience I gained.

DS: Did you find working under intensive pressure made the development of any sort of personal style difficult?

JG: No, I didn't. It gave me more opportunity to experiment, because you don't have to answer to anybody as in the case of sponsored documentaries. In the BBC, once they have agreed to the subject and the budget, then there is virtually nothing you can't do. But, working for a public corporation, you are basically very concerned with reaching an audience, and I suspect that some of the high flights of individual exploration have to be curtailed. Not being a particularly flamboyant person, I have had fewer problems in this sense than

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The Reckoning
Jack Gold, Rachel
Roberts, Nicol
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have others; although it is restricting working with reporters as you have to share an editorial decision, but in my latter years I didn't have this problem at all. I think there is more freedom in television than there is outside. More freedom, but, at the present time, it's very difficult to do the shorter items where one can experiment, especially now that the *Tonight* programme has finished. Now you have to fill a thirty-minute or a fifty-minute spot or something like that.

A couple of years ago, I did some short stories for the BBC by a man called Coppard. They were a fantastic success; I've never had letters like it. I'm just indicating the kind of freedom that you get at the BBC. Ken Loach is as great a believer in this as I am. He's done Wednesday Plays – *Cathy Come Home*, for instance, which is one of the best things that has appeared in celluloid in Britain in the last ten years. What British feature films have had that kind of impact? On the first viewing, he had a 15,000,000 viewing audience. All right, so nearly half of them were asleep and half of them were making cups of tea, but there were still 3,000,000 people watching intelligently and maybe caring about that programme. What film in the cinema has had that impact anywhere in the world? Ken Loach is making feature films, but he's got this same feeling as I have of: 'What's so marvellous about making a feature?' Maybe it's because people think you've got more control, more time to polish it, and that you're going to reach a bigger audience. Is it status? Is it just

more money? Is it because there is a sort of cachet about the feature film that there isn't about television? That's why Ken Loach, Ken Russell and myself are happy to work for television, because it's a great place to work. You know you've got an audience. A year of my life, virtually, was spent making *Bofors*. Now if that ran for a year in the cinemas to packed audiences, it would still not get as big an audience as it would if it were run for one night on television. If it runs in the cinema and people make an effort to go and see it, does it have more impact than if it had been a Wednesday Play? I don't know, and I don't suppose anybody does.

DS: A lot of the new young British film directors originally worked in television. I'm thinking of Kevin Billington, John Boorman, Ken Loach, Ken Russell and yourself. Could you say something of the connections that have been established between the two media?

JG: With the increase of American finance over the last few years, there have been tremendous opportunities for making films, and consequently there has been an enormous raid on available talent. All that television work had done was to show producers and distribution companies that the director was capable of making a visual programme that was up to a sufficient standard for them to be interested. In a few cases it was because the individual showed enormous flair or talent, but sometimes the seduction was too rapid. Schlesinger, for example, didn't go straight from television to features; he worked as a second unit director and made outside documentaries. On the other hand, Ken Russell went straight from television to his first feature. He probably regrets it as being too much of a rush. Boorman made a direct jump, I made a direct jump, but, as I said, I spent several years in the cutting-room. I worked my way up: it's true I wasn't in the film industry, but I was working with film all the time.

DS: Is it true that in the last few years there have been more people making feature films who have come out of television than have actually worked their way up through the film industry?

JG: I think it probably is true in the main because of this pressure-cooker thing again. In television I was doing

an average of four one-hour documentaries a year – sometimes with actors, sometimes not. Some of the other directors were perhaps doing three full-length plays a year. All right, so it's not in colour, and maybe it is not as technically proficient as a feature film; but we are working with actors, film cameras and editing equipment. After this it is a natural progression to go into features. The talent is there to be seen or tested, and, if a producer thinks: 'Right, this guy's got something,' at least he can base it on something, whereas the leap from being an editor to directing a feature, within the film industry itself, is much greater. In television, if a man makes a few mistakes, so what.

DS: Coming to *The Bofors Gun* could you tell me how it started?

JG: I left working full time for the BBC four years ago. I went free-lance with the sort of contract which let me work for the BBC half the year so I had a certain amount of financial independence. I used the other six months of the year to try and set up a feature. My agent wrote around saying I was available. The Producer of *The Bofors Gun*, Otto Platchkes who produced *Georgie Girl*, had seen a couple of my television things. They were the sort of things that were unlikely to induce a producer to back me for a feature: one was about famine in India, which was as stark a documentary as you can get, I suppose, and the other was a sort of *cinéma vérité* documentary about a trade union dispute. However, he thought I might be interested in doing a book he had. I read it, but couldn't finish it. I didn't like it at all, although I was dying to make a feature. I still maintain it is silly to do things you are not interested in doing. A feature is such a big thing that if it fails you may never make another. If you are going to fail you might as well fail in something you want to do. So I went to meet Platchkes saying I didn't like the book and we had a chat. Shortly afterwards he got in touch with me and asked me if I could do *The Bofors Gun*. We discussed it and it all happened. It was very quick, as far as I can understand. From the time that I was sent the play to the film's first showing in the West End was almost exactly a year.

DS: Why did you choose it in the end?

JG: There are many films I like to watch, but not many

films I'd like to make. In the case of the first project Otto Platchkes offered me, it is quite likely that I would have watched the book if it was a film, but it was not a film I was interested in making. The characters didn't particularly interest me, and I found the situations too frivolous. I found it so irrelevant, whereas *Bofors*, although it dealt with a closed community in an area and a subject I didn't know personally, struck me as being a *realistic* situation: people motivated by things that were important, that had relevance outside this particular Army situation. In a situation like that, one is faced with moral problems all the time, and I think that is what intrigued me most. I am not really a formalist; I can't enjoy watching decorative films and I find them rather boring to make.

DS: Could you say something of what your taste in film making is?

JG: I enjoy watching good musicals. I would love to make a good musical. I would love to have made *Singing In the Rain*: it has its decoration, but it is very much part of its content. I don't mind seeing something ephemeral like *Un Homme et Un Femme*, which is enormously decorative and totally meaningless: the moment you come out of the cinema you forget it. I saw *Faces* recently, which its most violent admirer wouldn't describe as being decorative, but it's one of the best films of the last year. I just hate formalism for its own sake – I won't say hate it – I'm sort of untouched by it. Some Bresson films I adore; sometimes I think they're too sparse. I adored *Mouchette* – I thought that was marvellous. Sometimes I think he pares them down too far.

In England Lindsay Anderson seems to me to have the best possible mastery of his craft linked with what he's trying to say. Ken Russell is probably even more of a virtuoso. He seems to make the subjects his own, which is the mark of a great stylist. He is a classic example of a stylist who manages to make his style and subject gell. He's produced some marvellous programmes, but at other times, it seems to me, the style becomes more important than anything else. He really does try to alter his style for the sort of subject he's doing. I didn't see his *French Dressing*; I enjoyed *Billion Dollar Brain* enormously, but I'm one of the few that did. I knew

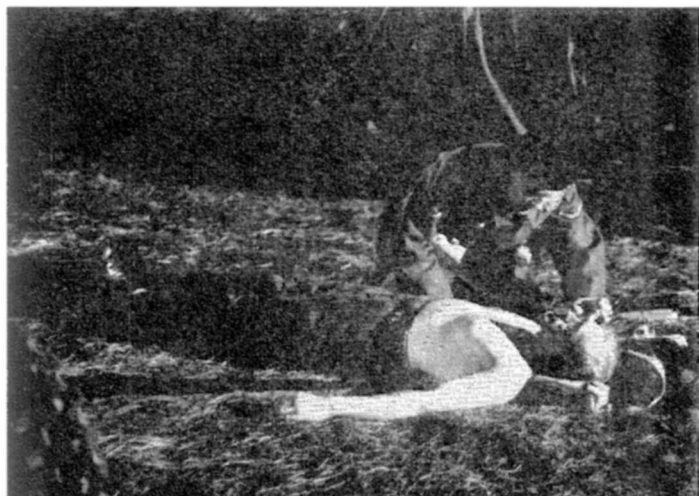
the story which is very complex and that helped. But visually and every other way, I thought it was great. I don't understand the great reaction against it. It worked like a dream – a bit indulgent in a couple of places. I think he could have got the scissors in a bit earlier, but that's a personal thing. I feel that composition must be set for what you're trying to do. It must be totally relevant to what you're saying and doing and too often compositions are not like that. Like some of the early Sidney Furie films, for example, *The Icress File* where everything was shot through something else. They were all great shots to look at but nothing at all to do with what was being said, and I don't mean dialogue. I enjoyed watching it, but I forgot it the moment I came out. It's a puritanical thing. When you go to the cinema, you always hope the picture's going to be a great one, but when you pick up a book of short stories or a paperback, you don't necessarily expect it to be a great one. I always hope for more out of the cinema, maybe because there's so much time and money and effort that's gone into it. When you consider that there are only 104 features spots in this country in a year, on the two chains, and there's something like 350 films that get made each year, that means you're not seeing over 200 films a year. With a book, you don't feel as if you've lost anything. On the other hand, I'm not asking only for meaningful films. I don't care if *Singing in the Rain* is meaningful or not, because I found it enormously enriching generally. I think that is really what I am after – enrichment – an expansion of intellect and emotion. There are three or four good thrillers which are unpretentious, but so well done that you get constant joy out of them. Unfortunately the whole business is geared to making money – no distributor ever says: 'This film won't make money, but we'll make it.' They can't throw away half a million dollars, which is the very least a normal film costs.

DS: Returning to *The Bofors Gun*, how artistically successful do you think it is?

JG: I can't tell you. It's only years after I have made a film that I can look at it and even then with only a certain degree of objectivity. I saw it recently with an audience. There are scenes that I know do work but others that for one reason or another don't. But this is purely subjective. I balled up the editing at the end,



The Bofors Gun



which I only realized when I saw it with an audience. He commits suicide with a bayonet and falls down out of shot. The lance corporal comes running out in the same shot and looks down – we don't see what he's looking at and he says: 'Wake up' – the audience knows that there's a bayonet in him. There's blood all over him. For a man to stand over the body and say: 'Wake up' makes them laugh, but then you cut to the body and he could in fact be asleep which stops the laughter dead. It's the wrong moment of the film to have a laugh. In the cutting-room it seemed all right because I knew that in the next shot he would look asleep, but when I first saw it with an audience I couldn't think what they were laughing at. I suddenly realized he should have come over, looked down; you see the body looking asleep, then he says: 'Wake up.' That's at the critical moment in the film, so there's an artistic flaw if there ever was one. It was a very wordy film, not one with visual delights. It's a film about people talking to each other which I hope is what's on the screen.

DS: What was its budget?

JG: It was under 400,000 dollars, which is about as cheap as you can make a film nowadays. Everyone was on percentages – the actors, the producer, and myself. The crew, the technicians and craftsmen weren't. It was made in six weeks.

DS: Was there any interference from the producer?

JG: The producer, the writer and myself had lots of discussions in the script stage, lots of discussions with the cast which I think worked. Once I started there was no interference from the producer or Universal. There's a general system where the director has the right of first cut, but after that the producer and distributor can do what they like. Unless you have a sympathetic producer who is going to fight for you against the distributor it's a terrible situation, because you shoot with cutting in mind. I shoot a scene knowing that I want it cut in a certain way. But otherwise, after your first cut, there's nothing you can do about it. That didn't happen with *Bofors*.

DS: What about the history of the distribution of this film?

JG: It was made for Universal who had a special deal with Rank. It's not just that Rank had first refusal on the film, they own it to the extent that, if they refuse to show it, then Universal cannot say: 'Right we're going off somewhere else,' unless Rank agree. We made the film. It got its censor's certificate. We showed it to Rank. There's one man at Rank who has the final say as to whether it goes on release or not, and he said 'No.' He doesn't have to give a reason, because if he did he would set a precedent. All he has to do is to say yes or no.

DS: Did you see *Private Eye*?*

JG: You mean the J. Arthur. We took it out. He may have been personally insulted by it: I don't know. Either that cut so deep that nothing would change his mind or he genuinely felt it was not a film that could go on release. Anyway he said: 'No,' although I understand that a lot of his subordinates would love to have shown the film. It was shown at the Odeon St. Martin's Lane, which is a cinema some taxi-drivers don't know exists. It's a cinema that's known for *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, which is a charabanc film – the kind of film that people will go and see wherever it is. That cinema gets no passing trade and not enough people went to *The Bofors Gun* there. Rank may be right, who knows? They're only governed by whether people are going to come into the place. The Essoldo, Chelsea, where it was shown later, seems to have proved them wrong. *Charlie Bubbles* received far better reviews than *Bofors*, which had mixed reviews. In its first week at St. Martin's Lane, it made a bit more money than *Bofors*, but after that about the same and Rank refused it a circuit release. You can't take the Odeon St. Martin's Lane as an indication of what a film could earn on release, because it's not a typical cinema. Even if they didn't consider *Bofors* a circuit film, how could they not consider *Charlie Bubbles* one? *Bofors* ran its five-week course at St. Martin's Lane and then nothing happened.

DS: Has it been shown in America?

JG: Oh yes. It got marvellous reviews in New York, where it ran for five or six weeks, but I don't think it did

* It was alleged in *Private Eye* that the film was refused a circuit release because Rank objected to one of the characters referring to another as having a 'J. Arthur.'

very good business there. I don't know what business it's doing in California. I don't know what distribution release has been like in America, but I should say it has had 80 per cent good reviews. It did well at the Essoldo, Chelsea, but there's a danger of films getting a cult audience merely because they are talked about. Although it's marvellous at one level, basically it's not right, because I suspect that people went to *Bofors* in Chelsea and treated it rather awesomely. I don't want it to be a cult film.

DS: Could you tell me about your new film, *The Reckoning*?

JG: It's nearly the same team as *Bofors*. It's the same writer John McGrath, although it's not an original work. It's adapted from a novel and Nicol Williamson is playing the lead. It's a different producer – an American who produced *The Whispers*.

DS: How did you set this up?

JG: The origin I don't know. The writer, whom I know quite well, telephoned me to say that Nicol had suddenly become available and that the director that they had intended to have was busy. He recommended me to the producer, who came round with the book and the script. I said I was interested and it suddenly happened, very quickly for the script was already in first draft stage. Columbia agreed to do it, subject to stylistic rewrites. The budget is about a million dollars. It's very curious, this budget thing. You work in TV with a budget of £3,000 or £4,000, sometimes as much as £10,000. Then, suddenly a film company gives you £150,000, like they did for *Bofors*. It sounds a lot and somehow it doesn't affect anything. It's a lot more money and you can see where it's going for the most part and it doesn't seem to mean anything.

The Reckoning is rather a cynical piece. It's about a hero of our time. About a man who comes from a tough working-class Catholic Liverpool background and, by his own ruthlessness and talent, makes his way south and becomes a tough business executive, marries a rich girl and becomes a kind of 'trouble shooter,' in a big established organization, rejects his past and background completely. He is a complete Machiavelli of the boardrooms, the sort of person that business executives like to use, but don't acknowledge. He

hears that his father is very ill in Liverpool, a man he has great affection for, but hasn't seen for five years. This comes in the middle of double dealings at his work. He goes back to Liverpool, back to his past, and finds his father is dead. He has been kicked to death in a pub fight. The mores of traditional Irish Catholics, in this sort of situation, are that the son should avenge the death. You don't bring the police into things like this. But he has rejected all this. The film is a conflict between what is expected of him, and what he is now. Yet they are strangely similar. One is the area of the naked boot and the naked fist, and the other is the area of the gloved fist and stiletto. It's a portrait of society today seen through one man who's bridged the gap.

DS: How do you feel about adaptations?

JG: Part of the reason films are usually based on plays and novels is that when you go to the money men and say: 'I've got a great idea,' they'll say: 'What is it?' If it's a book or a play, they know how it was received by an audience or with the critics, and this means it's easier for them to make decisions. The whole of film finance is self defeating. I really don't know the answer. But, you know, the seduction of working in the cinema is enormous because of the lengths to which you can go to obtain particular effects. The point is to make films you are interested in making.

Producers are usually the basic instigators of a lot of projects. They spend all their time at it. Agents send them books; they read books, stories, everything. When they've got something tangible in front of them, they can then go around to the money men or to writers. In such cases, the writers don't have to start from scratch. I'm far from saying that screenwriting isn't creative, but part of the work is basically done and it becomes a self-perpetuating thing. A lot of directors may take an idea from a book and transform it completely. It's the kind of thing that happens with Godard and Truffaut, for example. There are some great originators like Bresson and Buñuel, but you're never sure how much of it has come from a short story or paragraph. I don't see the distinction between that and, say, Michelangelo using models to sculpt from. It may be puritanical of me, but it would be lovely to think that the director began with an idea in his own mind, which

he then developed. This of course happens much more in documentaries, because it's very rare that you pick up a book and say: 'This will make a great documentary.' It does happen. I've done a film like that about solitary confinement in South Africa which is based on a book, but the majority of documentaries I've done are based on what people thought was a good situation. For example, I thought it would be fascinating to see what happened to all the sides of industry in a dispute situation. That had never been done before. I spoke to a lot of industrial writers. They'd never been allowed to cover both sides. The BBC thought it was a good idea and it meant having on call simultaneously three sound camera units, who could rush off at a moment's notice, if a situation was ever discovered that we were allowed to do. Through a combination of circumstances we were allowed to do it. It was an original idea that could only have been done in this way. You create a film from what there is: you may get a writer in to do a commentary, but that is all. Basically, it's a director's original work, whilst reportage documentaries, where you work with someone like Alan Whicker, involves creating a dialogue between the director and reporter. It would be marvellous if there were a more direct way of a director responding to a situation and creating a film, but I suspect it's an argument full of enormous flaws; for why shouldn't a director take an idea from a book? *The Treasure of Sierra Madre* was a book and a marvellous film. *Pather Panchali* was a novel. Do they become less great because they were taken from something else?

It's a wish for being more creative than one is, regretting that one didn't initiate the idea in the first place, e.g. writing the music for *Singing in the Rain* and then the words. Mind you, I have made films like that. The first film I made was a fictional piece for the BFI and that was an original, a thing called *The Visit*. I saw that again recently, and it was terrifying, but I'm more proud of that because at least it's mine. It may be arrogance, but I suspect there's that much more satisfaction when what you put up there is your own. One of the first things you have to realize as a film maker is how important everyone else is because you cannot do everything yourself. It would be fatal if you could. Which film director does everything? I think the director has to have the last say, because he takes

responsibility for every stage of the film. Other people come in at different stages, but they don't have overall responsibility for executive decisions right through to details like whether the music should finish there or there. The director has to unify it and he is obviously the most important man in the film. Yet in some films you're not really aware of this and it doesn't really matter. I love films where you are totally unaware of the director. That's why I don't like decorative films where you're so much aware of the director saying: 'Look at me decorating.' Most film stylists aren't bigger than their subjects.

DS: What do you think are the long-term prospects for the cinema, especially in view of the supposed withdrawal of much American financial support?

JG: Hardly any, no film, as far as I know, made in this country and shown to full houses in this country would still pay its costs. It has to get distribution elsewhere, especially in America. You've got to think of American exhibition. Before a film starts earning any money for its director, producer, and actors, if they went on percentages, it has to make 2.4 times its cost, which cannot be earned in this country alone. Somewhere along the line either costs are reduced or the slices that exhibitors and distributors take are reduced and the monopoly of exhibition is broken. I don't see how you can avoid some sort of American finance because they have enough money to take the risks. It may be possible to set up some kind of consortium of producers and directors of cross collateral – three or four directors, say, get together and they agree to get a merchant bank to finance them with the hope that it reaches distribution in America, or that one film's loss becomes another film's profit. At least you get the films made. It may work but the costs are so enormous. I find it terrifying that 75 minutes of TV, a Wednesday Play, for example, costs something like £20,000; but suppose you made a 16-mm. feature film with television crewing and lighting and technical finish, which isn't cinema's technical gloss, and suppose, this is in black and white, not colour, (because every film has to be made in colour for possible sale to American TV), it would cost at least £50,000. The last few films I made I would happily have shot in black and white and so would the producers, but they had to be in colour which adds enormously to the cost.

Why can't they be in black and white and be shown in small cinemas up and down the country? I don't know how much *Faces* cost, but that would have been made for £50,000. What's the matter with *Faces*? You could show that in small cinemas and it could make its money.

DS: Are you trying to set up another film?

JG: John McGrath and I have a book in mind which we think would make a marvellous film. It's called *Comrade Jacob*. This is about the Cromwellian period, about the Diggers. We may not be able to set it up. It's not an original idea, and, if anybody's going to be responsible for the final thing on the screen, there's a sense in which it could be said to be the writer. But where do you stop? Because the writer, of course, is dependent on the figures having existed. The real test is whether what you're seeing is meaningful, relevant, and illuminating.

DS: Why do you think it would make such a good film subject?

JG: It's very relevant to today's period of history. It's an incredible part of English history, the first real republic and a period of enormous social change and ideological fervour, when it looked as though society might change radically. In that situation, a group of people who believed in certain things tried, without harming anyone else, to live in a certain way. It is a study of how society at that time reacted to them. It's a fascinating insight into an ideologue and a very human portrait of different sorts of people of the time. It works on every level for me. It's not often you find a book like that.

William Friese Greene and the Origins of Cinematography III

Brian Coe

3 FRIESE GREENE AND THE INTRODUCTION OF CINEMATOGRAPHY

Having examined the work of Friese Greene as recorded in the contemporary photographic press, it is now necessary to consider this in relation to the work of other individuals, and from this to assess Friese Greene's true place in the history of cinematography.

The phenomenon of persistence of vision, on which the motion picture is based, was first scientifically investigated at the beginning of the nineteenth century. P. M. Roget, by his paper to the Royal Society in 1824, was responsible for arousing interest in the effect, and as a result other scientists, including Faraday and Plateau, commenced investigations. As a by-product of their researches several toys appeared, which used the principle of persistence of vision for their effect. Among them was the Phenakistiscope, introduced simultaneously and independently by J. A. Plateau and Stampfer in 1833 and the earliest direct ancestor of cinematography. It used a disc bearing a sequence of images on its surface, rotated and viewed by reflection in a mirror, through slots in its circumference. The slotted disc acted as a shutter, giving intermittent glimpses of the successive pictures on the surface of the disc, by which means the sequence of apparently superimposed images appeared to move.

This was the earliest device to make use of the principle of persistence of vision to give a moving picture. Subsequently modifications and improvements were made, notably in the form of the Zoetrope, a cylinder with slotted walls in which was placed a band carrying a sequence of drawings. When rotated, the Zoetrope gave an apparently moving image, seen through the slots. Modifications, such as the Wheel of Life devised by T. Ross for the magic lantern, gave an enlarged, projected moving image. The Choreuto-

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scope, introduced by Beale and modified later by Hughes in 1884, substituted intermittent movement of the disc or strip of pictures for the continuous movement of the Wheel of Life. It used a modified Maltese Cross movement, with a shutter covering the images while they moved. This produced a steadier, brighter, less distorted image than before. Thus, by the early 1880's, the principle of intermittent movement of a sequence of pictures for projection had been established. J. A. R. Rudge's early experiments were on a modified form of Choreutoscope, in which seven lantern slides were carried round the lamp-house of a magic lantern, intermittently projected and transported by a modified Maltese Cross mechanism. He discarded this method, however, for one in which, by using two or more lenses, pictures could be projected in succession by 'dissolving' one into the next, without using persistence of vision. This was the basis of the 'Phantascope' and 'Bio-Phantascope' lanterns made by him and often demonstrated by Friese Greene.

Although the principle of *synthesis* of movement from a series of pictures had thus been known from 1830 onwards, the *analysis* of movement, although understood in principle from the earliest days of photography, was not achieved until the introduction of photographic materials which allowed an 'instantaneous' exposure to be made. When this became possible – particularly after the introduction of the gelatin-silver bromide dry plate process in the 1870's – a number of scientists began to use photography to record the movements of animals. One of the first, and certainly the best-known, of these 'chronophotographers' was Eadweard Muybridge, a native of Kingston-upon-Thames, who worked in America for most of his life. By using batteries of as many as twenty-four cameras exposed in sequence, Muybridge made many thousands of records of the movements of animals and human beings, and from 1877 onwards his work became well known, particularly when he began to lecture all over the world, showing his results by projecting them with his Zoopraxiscope projector – a large-scale version of Ross's Wheel of Life lantern slide device.

Muybridge's projected pictures had a realism hitherto unseen, derived as they were from photographs. Muybridge thus demonstrated that it was possible, albeit somewhat awkwardly, to analyse movement photographically, and to re-combine such photographs to give a life-like moving picture. The drawbacks to Muybridge's method were, of course, the bulk and complexity of his twenty-four camera

system, and the limited record possible with only 24 pictures at a time.

Both these problems were solved by Professor Marey, a French physiologist, who, in the early 1880's, was studying the flight of birds. On hearing of Muybridge's work, Marey discarded the cumbersome mechanical devices he had been using and turned to photography. His first apparatus was the 'photographic gun'. A rifle-shaped camera, it contained a long-focus lens producing images around the edge of a circular photographic plate, rotated intermittently by clock-work. The plate was exposed, while stationary, by a rotating shutter, which covered the plate while it moved on for the next exposure. By this means Marey obtained 12 to 15 pictures in about one second on his plate. The camera was portable – unlike Muybridge's apparatus – but the number of exposures was still very limited. This limitation was imposed by the necessity to use glass as the carrier of the sensitive emulsion, but with the introduction of paper roll films in the mid-1880's Marey designed a new camera. It employed rolls of paper film, carried on daylight loading spools; the film was intermittently moved through the exposing aperture by a clamping device which held it flat and stationary while exposed by a rotating shutter, and a spring which pulled the right length of film through the exposing aperture when the clamp was released. Although simple in design, the camera had all the basic elements of a motion picture camera, and worked extremely well.

Marey was thus the first person to solve satisfactorily the problem of making a camera which would record moving objects. Marey demonstrated his camera and pictures taken with it to the Academie des Sciences on 29 October 1888; it was widely reported in the photographic press: *The Photographic News* referred to details and diagrams of the camera in *Comptes Rendus* for October, and mentioned Marey's pictures of swimming eels taken 'at five . . . in one tenth of a second'.⁶⁹ On 23 November 1888, the same journal said, 'M. Marey has lately designed a fresh apparatus of extraordinary delicacy for the study of the successive movements of a body in motion. The images are obtained on sensitive paper which is unrolled as required, but to obtain sharp pictures it is necessary that the movement should not be continuous, but that there should be successive pauses for each pose.'⁷⁰ As soon as celluloid roll film became available from the Eastman Company, at the beginning of 1890, Marey used this more satisfactory material. *The Amateur*

Photographer of 2 May 1890, said, 'His results, as reported in *La Nature* are obtained on a celluloid film of great length which is used in a roll-holder attached to what Marey calls his "photographic gun." Fifty exposures per second can be made.'⁷¹ Marey's work continued to be reported and illustrated at regular intervals in the years that followed. Examples of his work still in existence show that his apparatus was capable of very high quality results, at speeds up to 100 pictures per second.

By 1888, then, the principles of analysis and synthesis of movement had been established and embodied in workable apparatus. However, Muybridge, Marey and others working in 'chronophotography' were concerned primarily with the analysis of movement for scientific purposes, examining and measuring individual pictures. The application of their apparatus to popular entertainment and profit was of no concern to them. The introduction of cinematography proper was to be left to individuals working more for profit than science.

In 1888 Thomas Alva Edison, the American inventor, had a meeting with Muybridge. During this meeting, reported by *The New York Nation* of 19 January 1888, it was suggested that a combination of Muybridge's apparatus and Edison's phonograph would provide a means of recording reality more effectively than anything before.⁷² As a result of this conversation Edison decided to produce an optical equivalent of the phonograph – a machine for recording moving objects as the phonograph recorded sound. On 8 October 1888, he filed a Caveat, No. 110, with the American Patent Office, outlining some of the means by which he proposed to achieve his purpose. After some preliminary work by Edison 'the working out of the idea was entrusted to Mr. W. K. L. Dickson, a clever young electrical engineer.'⁷³ Dickson, a descendant of the Lauries of Maxwellton, had gone to America from Scotland in 1879, at the age of 19. By 1881 he was employed by Edison, and was entrusted by the inventor with the development of a number of projects including that of making animated pictures.

It was largely through the efforts of this young Scotsman that by the early months of 1889 a working camera mechanism had been designed. Held up for want of a suitable sensitized material for the camera, Edison wrote to George Eastman, whose 'Number 1 Kodak' box camera had revolutionized popular photography with the slogan, 'You

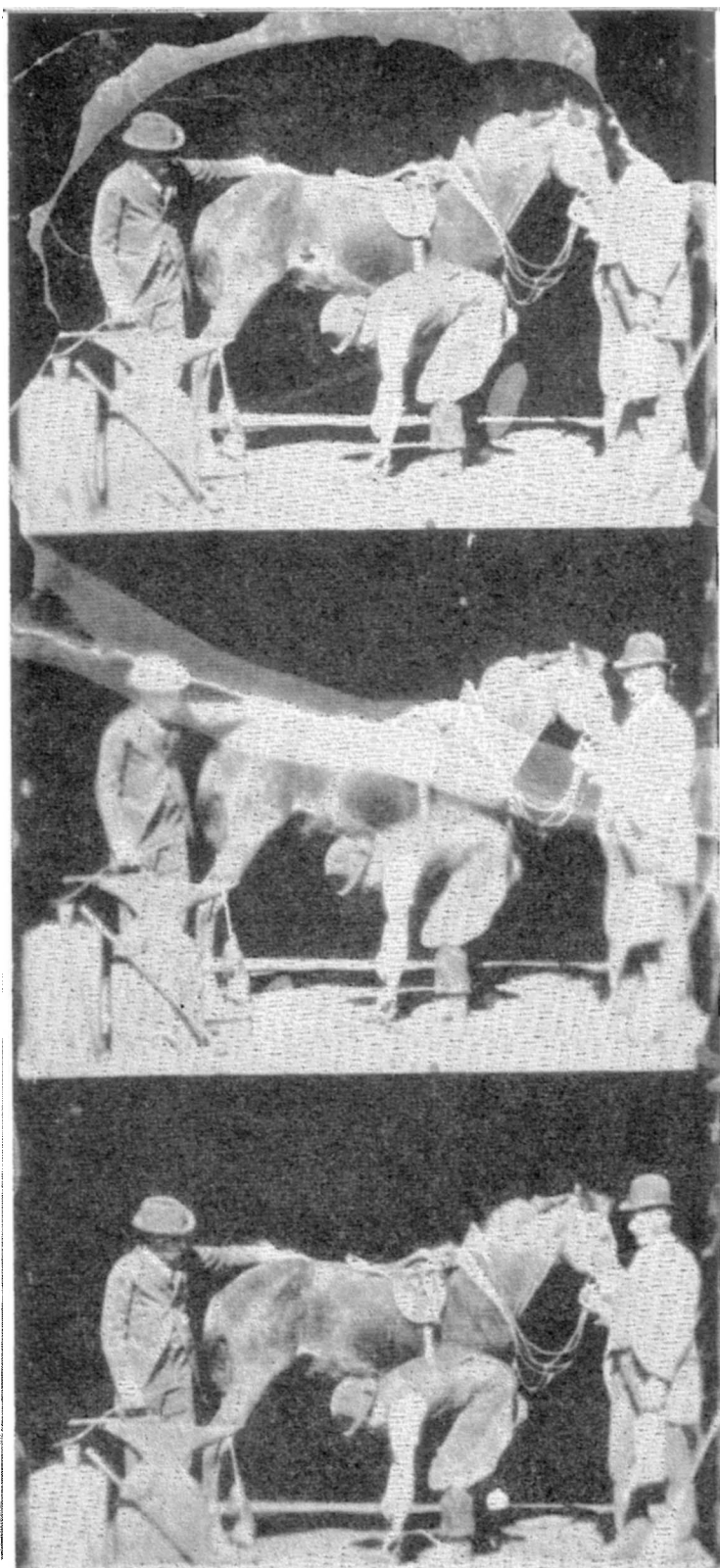
press the button, we do the rest.' Eastman at this time was working on a celluloid base to replace the paper negative films hitherto used; at Edison's request he sent samples of the new film. It proved the answer to Edison's problem, and by May 1889, the 'Kinetograph' camera was in operation. It used film 35 mm. wide, with four rectangular perforations to each side of the picture (Fig. 5). A sprocket wheel, driven intermittently by an escapement mechanism, was used to transport the film through the camera; the combination of sprocket wheel and perforated film ensured accurate registration of successive images and positive drive to the film – the two major requirements of a successful camera.*

The first indication on this side of the Atlantic that Edison's work had been successful came on 7 February 1890, when several photographic journals reprinted a report from *The New York Herald*: 'Gestures and Speech mechanically reproduced – Edison has been developing his great idea of making use of photography as an adjunct to the phonograph . . . The results of Edison's experiments has been a wonderful machine. In front of the speaker are placed two small machines, one a phonograph and the other an ingenious piece of mechanism by which photographs of the speaker are taken in succession at enormous rapidity at intervals of from one eighth to one twentieth of a second . . . The results thus obtained may be sent to any desired point, and the photographs thrown upon a screen by an ingeniously contrived piece of mechanism . . . The greatest difficulty experienced by Edison in his experiments was the synchronization of the two instruments . . . but this was finally overcome and the experiments were crowned with success. What the commercial value of this invention may be is yet to be decided. It cannot fail to be intensely interesting as an exhibition feature, but whether it will fill a niche in the everyday life of the world is another question.'⁷⁴ A later report said, 'Mr. Edison is not pushing the matter at present, being absorbed in his experiments of electrical traction for street cars. When that problem is decided he may bring this new invention prominently before the public. We wait.'⁷⁵

On 28 May 1891, Edison gave a demonstration of his apparatus which was reported in *The Photographic News*: ' . . . by Dalziels Agency, New York, May 28th . . . Mr. Thomas A. Edison gave to a press correspondent today a full description of his latest and most surprising device,

* See Appendix One.

Fig. 5. Three frames
of an early film made
by Edison, 1891



called the Kinetograph.⁷⁶ The report contained a description of the camera; the pictures were said to be taken at 46 a second and when processed and replaced in the machine, could be projected with a 'calcium light' on a screen. The camera and a recording photograph were linked. After Edison had shown the camera mechanism, a film was then projected life-size. In this same year, 1891, Edison took out U.S. patents for the Kinetograph camera (No. 589168) and for the Kinetoscope viewer (No. 493426). Although Edison had, in his first demonstrations, projected the pictures taken with the Kinetograph, he decided to introduce his moving pictures to the public in the form of peep-show cabinets which he called Kinetoscopes. Each cabinet contained about 50 feet of 35 mm. film in an endless loop; passing continuously under a viewing lens, each frame of the film was briefly illuminated by a flash of light from a rapidly rotating shutter passing between the film and an electric lamp. The speed of the film – 46 pictures per second – and the short duration of each flash of light produced, by persistence of vision, an apparently continuously illuminated moving photographic picture. The whole mechanism was run by an electric motor, arranged to operate on the insertion of a coin. The principle of the Kinetoscope was very simple, but because of this it was very robust and well suited for its purpose, applying relatively little strain and wear to the film.

The Kinetoscope was first publicly shown in 1893; one of the earliest occasions in May 1893 'was the annual election of officers in the Department of Physics, Brooklyn Institute. The instrument was one of many made for the World's Fair, and was exhibited by Mr. W. K. L. Dickson.'⁷⁷

The Kinetoscope arrived in Britain on 18 October 1894, when 'a number of press representatives were invited to view the Kinetoscope, now on exhibition at 70, Oxford Street . . . To show such a scene as a bar-room fight, with the arrival of a policeman, requires about 700 views which pass the eye of the observer at the rate of forty-three per second . . . The present price of the instrument is £70.'⁷⁸ On 25 January 1895, *The Amateur Photographer* said, 'We have only this week had the chance of a spare moment to see this; and those who want to be astonished and amused we should strongly recommend if they have not yet seen it, to take the earliest opportunity of doing so.'⁷⁹

The introduction of the Kinetoscope to the public was the

turning point in the story of cinematography; not only were motion pictures shown to be practical – this had been in little doubt for many years – but they were shown to be profitable, too. Among those inspired by the Kinetoscope were the Lumière brothers, in France, who in 1895 made, patented and demonstrated their Cinématographe, and became the first publicly to present *projected* animated pictures, with payment for admission, when on 28 December 1895, they opened their film shows at the Grand Café in Paris.

In Great Britain, the arrival of the Kinetoscope influenced Robert W. Paul (often, with justification, called the ‘father of the British film industry’) and Birt Acres, who commenced working together to produce moving picture devices. They soon separated; Acres went on to develop his Kinetic Lantern and was the first Englishman successfully to produce and show animated pictures. He patented his apparatus on 27 May 1895 (No. 10474) and, after several private demonstrations, projected a number of films to the Royal Photographic Society, on 14 January 1896 – the first successful public demonstration of *projected* motion pictures in Great Britain.⁸⁰ Among the subjects shown were the Derby of 1895, the opening of the Kiel Canal by the German Emperor, and the Boat Race.

Robert Paul also successfully developed apparatus for taking and projecting moving pictures, which he christened the Animatographe. Paul, by his film presentations in theatres such as the Alhambra, Leicester Square, from March 1896 onwards, and by his manufacture and sale of cameras, projectors and films, did more than any other individual towards the establishing of the cinematograph industry in this country.

Where, then, does Friese Greene fit into the story? The events described above were the most significant steps in the long development of cinematography, but yet it is claimed for Friese Greene that he ‘invented’ the moving picture. It is obvious that no one person can be said to have ‘invented’ cinematography – its development was a gradual process over almost one hundred years. However, we can examine the specific claims made for his work in the light of the evidence so far.

The story of Friese Greene’s life and work is given in detail in only one publication: *Friese Greene – Close-up of an inventor*.¹ This biography, by Ray Allister, deals more with his private life than with his work; there is little technical detail. The

principal claims made for Friese Green by his biographer are as follows:

1. In 1887 he projected a dancing skeleton in the window of his Piccadilly studio, causing a crowd to collect. The projector was 'built to show photographs taken by the camera, the "ingenious" back of which he had shown to the Photographic Society two years before.' (pp. 39-40.)

From the description given, it is highly probable that an ordinary Choreutoscope was used in a conventional lantern, the dancing skeleton being a favourite subject for this type of slide. Indeed, the whole episode is curiously like one described in *The Photographic News* on 9 January 1891. Using a Choreutoscope a 'friend of ours . . . cast the image of a skeleton upon the white side of a house near his own, much to the consternation of passers-by. The apparently dancing figure was about 40 feet high . . . His little joke was only carried on for a few minutes, for the crowd which quickly assembled proved to be very inconvenient, and very difficult to disperse.'⁸¹

2. In 1887 he designed a camera using perforated paper film, working at seven or eight pictures a second. (p. 42.)

There is no contemporary evidence at all to support this claim. From Friese Greene's readiness to demonstrate all the experiments on which he worked, it is highly improbable that he worked on such a camera at this early date without showing it at society meetings.

3. In 1888 he exhibited this camera to the 'London and Provincial Photographic Society (*sic*), the Bath Photographic Society and the Royal Photographic Society, using, among others, a film of a street scene in Brighton. Bits of that film still exist.' (p. 43.)

Friese Greene did *not* demonstrate any camera in 1888 to the named societies, according to the contemporary records. It is likely that the scraps of film still existing were taken at a much later date, after 1895, when Friese Greene was living in Brighton.

4. In 1888 he discarded paper film and made his own celluloid films, in 'thin, clear, even strips' in his Brooke Street laboratory. (p. 45.)

The technical problems involved in preparing long strips of

clear transparent celluloid from raw material, and the subsequent coating of 20 or more feet of such celluloid with photographic emulsion are such that it is extremely unlikely that he could have done this in his small laboratory. It is known that at this time he *was* preparing small sheets of opaque celluloid, embossed with ornamental designs and coated with emulsion, on which he printed portraits. These opal prints he demonstrated several times at photographic society meetings.^{82,83}

Probably this work has become confused with his camera experiments. The 1889 patent referred to paper roll films, commercially available since the mid-1880's. The first demonstrations of the camera also mentioned paper film. On 27 November 1889, Mr. H. Smith, of the Eastman Company, demonstrated the new celluloid roll films to Bath Photographic Society; Friese Greene was present.⁸⁴ The celluloid films were on sale from January 1890 – the first mention by Friese Greene of his use of celluloid films came on 25 February 1890.²¹ Friese Greene almost certainly will have made use of the commercially available materials – first paper, then celluloid films; there would have been little point in attempting the formidable task of home-making roll films.

5. In late 1889, with Mortimer Evans, he designed a two-lens camera taking stereoscopic pictures. (p. 45.)

The only two-lens camera with which Friese Greene worked was that patented by Varley in 1890; Evans does not appear to have had anything to do with it.

6. Using this camera, he photographed his cousin in Hyde Park, and, after developing and printing the negative, he prepared 'his camera to act as a projector' and projected a moving picture on a screen in his laboratory, with a policeman for a spectator. (pp. 46–48.)

The surviving few frames of film exposed in such a camera, together with the design of the camera itself, show that it operated at only two or three pictures a second. The camera spools had only sufficient capacity for about 20 feet of film – which was over seven inches wide carrying images $3\frac{1}{4}$ in. square. It was stated repeatedly by Friese Greene that such a film would be used to prepare lantern slides for a Rudge type lantern, which employed at the most some two dozen pictures. There is no evidence that a satisfactory projection was ever given.

7. He showed his camera to 'various photographic and learned societies' and then designed a third camera which was patented on 21 June 1889. (pp. 49-50.)

The records show that no camera was demonstrated before the patent application; the first demonstration was in September 1889.¹² The camera patented in June 1889 was the joint work of Friese Greene and Evans, and it is highly probable that it is the first camera on which Friese Greene worked.

8. In June 1889 he wrote to Edison, giving full details of his apparatus, suggesting that it should be combined with Edison's phonograph. (p. 54.)

There is no direct evidence proving or disproving this. If he did write, his information can have had no effect on Edison's work, which by this time was virtually complete. The Kinetograph camera bore no resemblance whatever to the somewhat impractical camera of Friese Greene.*

9. On 25 February 1890, 'the first *public* show of motion pictures taken on celluloid was given' to Bath Photographic Society. (pp. 56-57.)

The reports of the meeting show that only the camera mechanism was shown. No projection was carried out.^{20,21}

10. At the Chester Photographic Convention in 1890 he read a paper, 'Photography in an Age of Movement,' and 'created a sensation.' (p. 57.)

This was the title of the paper read at Bath on 25 February 1890. The Chester paper was entitled 'Suggestions' and was taken as read. A projection demonstration using a Rudge type lantern failed.^{28,30}

The camera exhibited at Chester by Friese Greene was that patented by Varley.

11. 'Leading scientists considered him a brilliant young man whose ideas were significant and important.' (p. 58.)

To judge from the reception given to many of his strange demonstrations of photographic and other phenomena, it is very unlikely that this was true.

12. In 1893 he patented a stereoscopic projector - the first of its kind. It was also capable of colour photography by the use of a three colour revolving disc. (p. 72.)

* See Appendix Two.

The apparatus described in the 1893 patent was almost identical to that patented by Varley three years before. There is no mention whatever in the patent of a colour process of the kind described.

Most of these claims seem to be derived from Friese Greene's own affidavit made in America in 1910. It was made for use as part of a legal action between the Motion Picture Patents Company and the Independent Motion Picture Company, but was never called in evidence. It is full of the most surprising inaccuracies – particularly in dating; not only are dates and details of demonstrations wrong, but even on matters like the opening of his own photographic studios he is as much as two years incorrect. It is obvious that after some 20 years his memory was not accurate, and the information contained in the affidavit cannot be taken seriously.

What, then, is the significance of Friese Greene's work? For most of the time that he was experimenting in this field he was associated with Rudge, Evans or Varley. How much of what he demonstrated was due to him and how much to his collaborators it is hard to say. Although undoubtedly in 1889 and 1890 he used cameras to take sequences of pictures in rapid succession, the surviving examples are of very poor photographic quality. There is no evidence that he solved successfully the problem of projecting these sequences, even with a Rudge lantern. It is certain, too, that his work had no appreciable effect upon the introduction of cinematography, which developed along the lines described earlier.

On the question of prior invention, Marey's film camera, efficient and workable, was in use and described to the scientific world some time before Friese Greene's first patent. In addition, L. A. A. LePrince, a French photographer who lived for some time in Leeds, had patented 'Improvements in the method of an apparatus for producing animated pictures' on 10 January 1888 (No. 423). The patent described both cameras and projectors for taking and showing moving pictures. The camera designs used from one to 16 lenses; the resulting sequences of pictures were to be cut up and mounted in sequence on a perforated band and passed through a sprocket-wheeled projector. The designs were somewhat impractical, although LePrince did take some sequences with his single-lens camera which were of reasonable quality. LePrince disappeared mysteriously while on a visit to France in 1890, at a time when he seemed near to

solving his remaining difficulties with a new camera design. He was never heard of again.

As for the suggestion that at least Friese Greene was the first person to grasp the possibilities of the moving picture coupled with the phonograph, as a means of recording history and of entertainment, the priority for this must go to Wordsworth Donisthorpe, a London barrister. Donisthorpe had experimented for many years on the problem of animating pictures. He filed a provisional patent specification on 9 November 1876, for an invention having 'for its object to facilitate the taking of a succession of photographic pictures at equal intervals of time, in order to record the changes taking place in or the movements of the object being photographed, and also by means of a succession of pictures so taken of any moving object to give to the eye a representation of the object in continuous movement.' (B.P. 4344, 1876.) He described a plate camera, in which the plates were rapidly changed behind the lens, exposure taking place while they were stationary. The resulting negatives could, he said, be printed on a long roll of paper and viewed momentarily as they passed before the eye. Although it is unlikely that he was ever able to put this into practice, the principles were at least sound.

Two years later, just after the introduction of Edison's phonograph, Donisthorpe wrote to *Nature*, following an article quoted from *The Scientific American* on the phonograph. In his letter he proposed a combination of his Kinesigraph camera with the phonograph so as to give a talking picture: 'The mode in which I effect this . . . may be briefly summed up thus: Instantaneous photographs of bodies or groups of bodies in motion are taken at equal intervals – say quarter or half seconds – the exposure of the plate occupying not more than one-eighth of a second. After fixing, the prints from these plates are taken one below another on a long strip or ribbon of paper. The strip is wound from one cylinder to another so as to cause the several photographs to pass the eye successively at the same intervals of time as those at which they were taken. Each picture as it passes the eye is instantaneously lighted up by an electric spark. Thus the picture is made to appear stationary while the people or things in it appear to move as in nature . . . I think it will be admitted that by this means a drama acted by daylight or magnesium light may be recorded and reacted on the screen or sheet of a magic lantern, and with the assistance of the phonograph the dialogues may be

repeated in the very voices of the actors. When this is accomplished the photography of colours will alone be wanting to render the representation absolutely complete, and for this we shall not, I trust, have long to wait.⁸⁵

So Wordsworth Donisthorpe, in January 1878, soon after the introduction of the first practical sound recording device, outlined a method of recording sound and picture together for subsequent re-creation, and thus most certainly has priority for *this* suggestion. Donisthorpe, together with W. C. Crofts, patented another design for a camera and projector, this time using flexible film, for taking and showing animated pictures, on 15 August 1889. The somewhat unusual design functioned very well, as a few surviving frames of film now in the Kodak Museum demonstrate (Fig. 6). Donisthorpe was unable to obtain financial backing to allow him to continue his experiments, and was forced to drop the matter.

Friese Greene's work must, then, be considered, with that of Rudge, LePrince, Donisthorpe, Varley and others, as an interesting but unfruitful attempt to solve the basic mechanical and photographic problems involved in cinematography; work off the mainstream of development of moving pictures. Friese Greene's own tragedy is that, while possessing a fertile imagination, he lacked the technical skill and scientific knowledge that might have led him to success.

The picture of the man that emerges from the papers and demonstrations at the Photographic Society is of one lacking in method, dabbling in all kinds of fruitless experiments without plan or control. The charitable explanation of such affairs as the ocular photographs and the iron salt is that his haphazard techniques led to mistakes and misinterpretations. He was unable to express himself clearly – at least on paper; it is frequently difficult to understand from his writings what he is trying to say. It is clear that he lacked an understanding of scientific terms and had a limited scientific vocabulary. He seems to have had a resilient character; 'I will try and try again until I succeed – I am so used to failures that I get like an egg, the more you boil it the harder it gets,'⁴⁷ and was not easily deterred by the criticism that followed many of his demonstrations. It is not likely that he was taken very seriously by his contemporaries, as his lack of thorough preparations and controls for his experiments did not impress the more knowledgeable of his audiences. His ideas and suggestions were always far ahead of his ability to carry

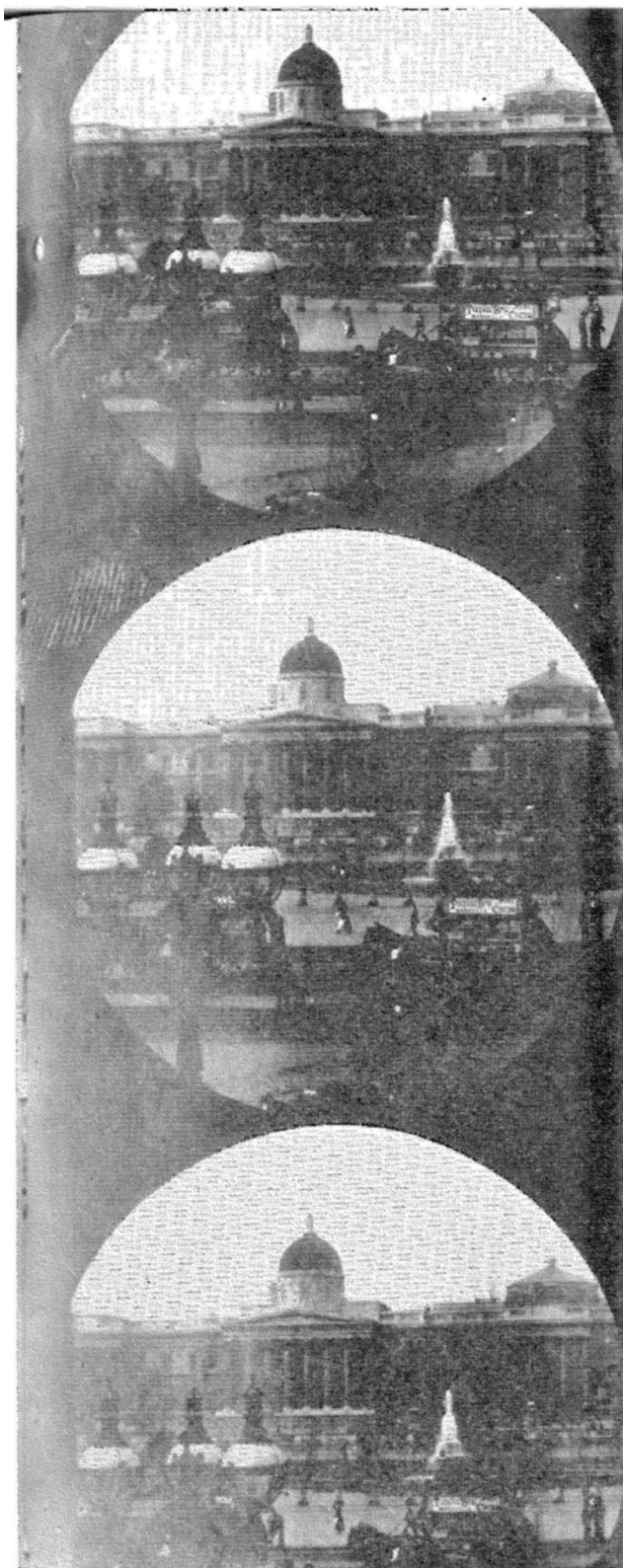


Fig. 6. Three frames of film exposed by Donisthorpe in early 1890.
(By courtesy of the Kodak Museum.)

them out; perhaps the last word should be left to a contemporary who wrote under the pen name of 'Talbot Archer.' Talking of the rapid iron salt process, he said, 'It is to be hoped that the affair will turn out better than Messrs. Varley and Greene's previous "inventions," which have been equally wonderful (upon paper) consisting of marvellous cameras, lanterns, etc., which have always been going to do something wonderful, but of which we have never seen the results.'⁸⁶

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Appendix One

Since this article was first published, the result of a detailed investigation into Edison's work has been published by Gordon Hendricks (*The Edison Motion Picture Myth*, University of California Press, 1961). By a careful study of Edison laboratory work-sheets, notebooks, etc., Hendricks has established that after the publication of Edison's motion picture caveat in October 1888, little work was done on the project until 1890. It was not until 1891, the year of the Edison patents, that a practical system was complete. Hendricks suggests that the earlier press reports were fanciful, and he attributes the ultimate success of the project to Dickson rather than Edison. However, this new examination of Edison's role does not affect the significance of the commercial introduction of the Kinetoscope in 1893 – an event of major importance in the history of the motion picture.

Hendricks's understandable enthusiasm for the destruction of the Edison 'myth' (always more widely believed in America than in Europe) has led him into some errors of judgement. In examining the work of other inventors, notably Friese Greene, he accepts without question claims as insubstantial as some of Edison's. He rarely gives Edison the benefit of the doubt when considering ambiguous statements, and some of his judgements on technical matters seem to indicate a limited experience in this field. However, the book is a mine of information, although somewhat heavy going for a non-specialist, and is a rarity among publications of early film history – a work based upon personal research rather than hearsay, imagination and plagiarism.

Appendix Two

Hendricks (op. cit.) has discovered in the Edison letter files two letters from Friese Greene. The first was written on 18 March 1890, and reads:

'T. A. Edison

Dear Sir

Have sent you by same post a paper with description of Machine Camera for taking 10 a second which may be of interest to you.

Yours faithfully

Friese Greene'

On 15 April 1890 Dickson replied:

'The paper, description of Machine Camera for taking ten a second, mentioned in your letter of 18th ultimo, addressed to Mr. Edison, has not yet come to hand.'

The paper, almost certainly a reprint of the Photographic News article of 28 February 1890, is not to be found in the Edison Archives. Hendricks has discovered no earlier letter than this, despite a thorough search of the Edison letter books for the relevant period in 1889.

The second letter was written on 9 May 1892 and reads:

'I wrote to you some time ago, asking if you could find a situation for me in America [this letter, if it ever existed, is now lost (Hendricks)].

Could you not find something remunerative that would suit me at the Chicago Exhibition. If so, I should be so much obliged for I am sick of Patents & Companies in England & people here imagine anyone can complete an invention while they are talking.

Yours very respectfully

Friese Greene

'Trusting you won't mind me writing.'

Edison's reply on 7 June was:

'Mr. Edison regrets that he is unable to offer you a position – He has nothing to do with appointments at the Chicago Exhibition.'

This article has been reprinted with permission from *The Photographic Journal*.

The appendices have been added by the author to bring the *Screen* reprint up to date.

Film and the Measurement of its Effects

Andrew Tudor

The keynote to any discussion of communication and consequences in film is well set by the famous Kendall-Wolf study of selective perception. The researchers screened a series of satirical anti-prejudice cartoons to a group of one hundred and sixty men and then conducted lengthy interviews with the subjects to explore their reactions. The results were startling. Two-thirds misunderstood the films, and a large proportion interpreted them as intended to create and intensify racial prejudice. The most important factor related to this misperception was the predispositions brought by the subject to the film. Some seventy-five per cent of those who were themselves prejudiced interpreted the cartoons as supporting their position. Other factors often thought of as important determiners of selective perception, such as level of education, were much less salient. The major differences between intended and communicated meaning were accounted for by this powerful element of personal predisposition.

Two pieces of research provide our outline. The first is the Kendall-Wolf study already mentioned. This, and other similar work, draws attention to the central importance of individual predispositions in determining the effect a communication may have. It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of such a factor.

The second emerges from a number of studies carried out by Elihu Katz, Paul Lazarsfeld, and their associates. They postulated what is generally known as the 'two step flow' hypothesis, arising from their discovery that the mass media had very little *direct* effect in changing or forming the attitudes of adults. However, in the communities which they researched, it was clear that there were some people who *were* affected by the media, and who also occupied a role in the community fittingly termed 'opinion leader'. They were individuals considered by others to be experts in some area,

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and who were sought after for advice in relation to it. They were also people who derived much of their information and many of their attitudes from the media. Thus, the researchers reasoned, the media can and do have effects, but only through the agency of opinion leaders and primary groups. The 'two step flow' is a path from the media to the opinion leaders, and from the opinion leaders to the others. Buried within this analysis is the suggestion that face-to-face communication in an established social context is far more efficacious for most people than the more 'anonymous' mass media. Somewhat surprisingly, the importance of this 'rediscovery of the primary group' has not featured so prominently in media research. Treneman and McQuail, for instance, did not build the possibility into their study.

Selective perception and indirect effects are phenomena argued to apply to all forms of mass communication. A further interesting range of questions arises if we explore what modifications (if any) the specific medium of film brings to such general processes. This, unfortunately, the least explored area of the communication process, requires some consideration of the medium. The sort of rampant generalization notoriously attributable to McLuhan and his disciples is not helpful, since it serves only to obscure the differences in which we are interested. We know that the 'electronic' media differ from those of the pre-modern era; our question must be, how do they differ from one another? We know that the interpretation of communicated items is a product of the items themselves and the attitudes of the individual concerned; what we do not know is the extent to which such phenomena vary between media and in relation to different styles within media. We know that indirect may be more important than direct effects, but we can also entertain the notion that some media are more likely to have one or the other type of effect by virtue of certain factors in the audio-visual situation, the 'language' they employ, and the cultural conventions associated with them.

To explore such questions we require a perspective applicable to all forms of communication within which significant differences may be established. One such perspective currently being developed is that of semiology, the science of signs. Others stem from various psychological and sociological approaches. In the present context I shall adopt a relatively simple approach resting on the view that the process of communication can, though does not necessarily,

operate simultaneously at a number of levels. Genuine theoretical elaboration would require more complex weapons.

The most general level at which we can 'understand' a film is in terms of the general outlook we see as underlying it. It is possible to infer some sort of 'world-view' from a film, usually ascribed to the director by the *auteur* theory but conceivably a pot-pourri of ideas and perspectives contributed by various individuals. Lindsay Anderson's *If...*, for example, can be argued to express a coherent anarchistic view of the world in general, the public school setting providing a specific context in which the ideas are thematically worked through. But the actual process of inference through which a general perspective is attributed to the film is predominantly a function of the audience. The film may consciously and clearly indicate the way – as I believe *If...* to do – or it may not, but it is very much the active contribution of the viewer which determines, at this level, the extent to which the film communicates. This is but one reflection of the necessity of involving the subjective viewpoint of the audience in any analysis of communication. Communication is a specific form of *interaction*, not a one way flow of information. The problem particularly seen in film (and certain other media such as music) is that the 'language' employed has much less capacity to express abstract general ideas and attitudes than, for example, the printed word. Apart from direct verbal statements to the audience and the use of written titles (interestingly, both techniques are increasingly employed by Godard) there is an inherent ambiguity in film communication at this level. This is reflected in the Kendall-Wolf study which, in effect, analyses the factors determining the process of inference, whereby the audience relates *specific* events portrayed on the screen to *general* ideas of prejudice. The fact that communication at this level is problematic without the participation of the audience allows considerable latitude for selective perception and free play of individual predispositions. It is the active contribution of the individual which determines, for him, which world-view is inferred, or whether one is inferred at all. We are all familiar with critical discussions revolving around such questions as: 'What does this film mean?' Such discussions are often effectively asking: 'On what grounds can I validly make inferences from this film?' It is, perhaps, one of the functions of criticism to establish such grounds.

With many films there is difficulty in inferring any *consistent*

view. However, films also communicate some attitude to their specific subject matter through treatment, hero identification, and so on. But again there is some difficulty in suggesting that the film *as such* can completely determine this response; individual subjective attitudes are important. To take *If* . . . once more. Whatever your individual dispositions, it would be difficult to maintain that the film is kindly disposed to the public school it portrays, although a possible response would be to deny that this school is typical and so deny that the film is attacking a whole class of schools. There are ways in which the audience can be edged in the chosen direction. Identification is possibly one of the most important in relation to *If* . . . , particularly in a culture so used to such conventions. By and large, the film is very skilfully weighted leaving relatively little ambiguity as a basis for contradictory interpretation, at least at this level. Another recent film, *Bullitt*, typifies the more familiar state of affairs. The ambiguity in the film's structure and the manner in which the relationships between the principal characters are treated leaves us with a number of open questions, the answers to which may be determined as our dispositions direct us. Is there serious corruption in high places, or is Robert Vaughn only a hard-working ambitious politician? Sometimes he is presented in a sympathetic light, sometimes not. Presumably there is a moral point buried in the clumsy contrasts between Bullitt's violent world and the whatever-it-is that characterizes his relationship with Jacqueline Bisset; if so, what is it? The final contrasts between the gun and her sleeping figure make it more murky, and any view you may have to the position expressed in the film is dependent on what you personally choose to see. Ambiguity may be elevated to an aesthetic (Buñuel, for instance), but for the majority of films there seems to be considerable non-directed ambiguity. The interplay between spectator and medium can produce different communicated meanings. It seems that film has great difficulty in communicating precise attitudes without relying on expected patterns of response. If those who make the films and those who view them share a common culture one hundred per cent, then the situation might well be less ambiguous. We would, perhaps, have a medium like written prose capable, in principle, of accurate interpretation on the basis of one settled dictionary. But even this leads us on to further problems since, like written language, film can have certain emergent expressive or emotional properties. Perhaps the equation between film and poetry is not so extreme.

These ambiguities could be said to relate primarily to the 'intellectual' level of response. But there is considerable agreement that films rely quite heavily on essentially emotional characteristics, in both a thematic sense and a formal way common to all art forms. Responses in terms of 'enjoyable', 'beautiful', and so on, are ways of asserting our emotional satisfaction with a particular artefact. But the extent of reliance on such an appeal varies not only within media, but also between media. If we were to construct a scale measuring predominance of emotional communication in various media, it is likely that film would be placed close to the more emotional end, while television, for example, would be rather nearer the other. The factors differentiating these two audio-visual media in this respect seem to be two-fold: the situations in which they are viewed—an essential part of the communication process—and the conventions and expectations which determine individual patterns of response. For example, the complete darkness in which film is viewed has considerable effect on the intensity of emotional communication. Experimental psychologists have shown that where the quantity and spread of sensory information reaching an individual decreases – the cinema screen in a darkened room – the intensity and meaningfulness of the messages that are actually received is increased. Television, on the other hand, is generally viewed in some light, there are other sources of communication, and the physical environment has no sense of being specially related to the viewing situation. Similar reasoning can be applied to the social environmental factors. There are social psychological researches which suggest that the simple incidence of darkness breaks down some of the normally experienced social restraints. Crying in the cinema, for example, is not the same as crying in other public places.

There are further almost purely physical elements which can be invoked. The characteristic relaxed posture in which films are normally viewed is conducive to increased emotional receptivity. The whole audio-visual situation, or, rather, the characteristic response to it, has been likened to a prehypnotic state. Taken together, such environmental factors support the thesis that the cinema has great capacities for emotional forms of communication. In addition certain more specific conventions have grown up. The star identification syndrome is one important process. Even a cursory look at the material reported in Edgar Morin's *The Stars* or J. P. Mayer's two studies of audience preference provides

ample evidence for the oft quoted phenomenon of star identification. There are also theme conventions involving identification with specific characters. A naive version would be epitomized in support of the cavalry against the 'injuns', or there is the more complicated emotional identification with, say, Jimmy Porter in *Look Back in Anger*. Even in those cases where we are invited to take a moral side, we are unlikely to be invoked to do so by direct argument. Rather, we are emotionally pushed in the relevant direction; expressively cajoled into sympathy with this and antipathy to that.

On the evidence it would be difficult to deny the potentiality for emotional impact contained in the cinema screen. There are, nevertheless, thresholds of receptivity which set a limit for such effects. The central problem is to weigh the two types of force and assess the balance. We have all of us, undoubtedly, felt moved by something in the cinema, and yet almost immediately felt that this was not something by which we should be influenced. In effect, we entertain an immediate emotional response which is rapidly suppressed by a morally inspired feeling of guilt, though we may not conceive it in such terms. We know that the threshold of emotional receptivity is lowered in the cinema; it remains to discover by how much and for how long. It may well be that the reassertion of individual predispositions minimizes the initial emotional impact of a film. If you are in agreement with what you take to be the meaning of the film all well and good. But if you are not, it may be that that film is unable to sway you more than in immediate terms. The film may, in fact, allow us to vicariously act out suppressed desires; it acts as some kind of safety-valve. Until we ask the right kind of questions we cannot hope to find the truth of such assertions.

Regardless of these problems of emotion, belief, and attitude, film, it is argued, is an excellent communicator of straightforward information. It is notable that the vast preponderance of research has been carried out on films designed to operate predominantly as information carriers. The communication of straight-forward audio-visual information seems to be the least ambiguous. What problems there are arise very much from cultural differences between film and audience, and, a special case of this, lack of familiarity with cinematic 'language.' The general issue is neatly illustrated by the famous case of the chicken. An educational film was shown to a group of tribesmen and they were afterwards asked to explain what they felt was the most significant

element in the film. The almost universal common memory was that a chicken ran across the bottom of the picture in a certain scene, though it had only been visible for seconds and was completely irrelevant to the main theme. Why, then, was this the major, if not the only, effect on them of this film? The reason was specifically cultural. The chicken was an important bird in the cultural traditions of the tribe – their preconceived notions drew their attention to this minor event in an otherwise uninteresting (from their point of view) film. Such results are reminiscent of the possibly apocryphal story concerning Ingmar Bergman and the Censor. Bergman was asked to remove a few frames from one of his films in which a female nipple was briefly seen. His perceptions, however, were not channelled in such directions and he had immense difficulty in finding the shot. The Censor had found it with ease!

The problem of learning cinematic conventions is a special, if rather complex, case of cultural differences. It is partly so because the conventions are changing all the time, if only to a fairly limited extent. It is particularly noticeable in small children seeing a film for the first time. They generally have difficulty in comprehending shades of black and white. Once this is learned, it becomes necessary to make sense of cutting, shot distances, dissolves, time changes, and the various other techniques characteristic of modern film making. When learning is complete, there is evidence that such techniques enhance the impression made by the film. Mialaret and his colleagues constructed an interesting experiment in this context. They made three different films telling the same brief story; one employed absolutely minimal cinematic devices, the others used dissolves, rhythmic cutting, close-ups and the rest. The films were shown to groups of children. They found that at least some of the technical devices made understanding and retention easier, in particular the use of the close-up and of various modes of visual juxtaposition. This lends further support to the famous Kuleshov experiments on the power of juxtaposed images. The *same* image of a face was superimposed on various scenes: a coffin, a child playing, a bowl of soup, and so on. The audience felt that the actor expressed emotions related to the scenes – sadness, joy, hunger – quite brilliantly.

Assuming such conventions are learnt, what are we able to say about the communication of factual information in film? Rather surprisingly, in view of the amount of time and energy devoted to research in the field, we can say remarkably

little. What we can say tends to suggest that even at this level communication is considerably dependent on extra-cinematic factors. (The fact that certain things may be seen and heard through film which might not be so otherwise is not to be underestimated. But such a need can also be met by television with, possibly, better retention.) Carl Hovland and his colleagues suggested three areas of important determinants. They found that those of greater intellectual ability learnt more on a given exposure than those of less, a relation which held regardless of the difficulty of the material. There was little support for the view that film makes it easier for those of lower intellectual ability to learn, though film as an *aïd* may be a different matter. They also found that the amount learned varied according to motivation; announcing in advance a test of what was learned from the films increased learning some fifteen per cent. This effect may not, however, last where there is a normal expectation of tests. Finally, active participation in the learning process – rather than passive watching of the film – had differential effects on the success of the communication. In general, participation seems to help more when other conditions are less favourable. The relatively unintelligent, unmotivated men learnt more by participation than did the intelligent and motivated.

These examples should serve to illustrate that, even at the level of communication of direct information, longer term learning effects are dependent on the film *and* on extra-cinematic factors. It also seems that other more general problems could usefully be researched. For instance, what effect does an expectation that films should be entertaining and expressive have on the communication and retention of knowledge? Does there have to be a clear cultural distinction between the situation of 'learning' from a film and the situation of 'going to the cinema'? It might well be rather more difficult than is sometimes thought to sufficiently distinguish the two. For this reason, television, about which there are less limited expectations and which normally carries a number of educational or quasi-educational programmes, may be a more efficient medium for the communication of information. Whatever is the case, it is quite clear that retention of information from non-specialized films is not startlingly high. Selective perception and the predominance of immediate effects also operate at this level.

The levels of communication which I have employed as a loose framework are not only applicable to film. What *is*

distinctive is the way in which film seems to lean on the emotional-expressive mode. Attitudes, ideas, beliefs and values are communicated through appeal to emotion rather than 'rational' argument. This contributes to the ambiguities I have discussed and to the evident importance of selective perception in film communication. It also suggests that attitudes attacked on a primarily momentary and emotional basis would require considerable force, almost 'shock treatment,' if they were to be altered. Hence the familiar finding that film is an efficient reinforcing medium. Faced with an audience implacably opposed to its 'message' there is considerable likelihood that not only will it have no effect but, as in the Kendall-Wolf experiments, it will be interpreted in the opposite way to that intended. The fact that satire as a form has its own distinctive ambiguities can only go *some* way toward explaining the Kendall-Wolf results.

But most evidence is against important opinion change. The Hovland *American Soldier* researches found some change in opinion on *specific* factors related to their films, but very few or no effects in relation to more general opinion items nor in the motivation of their subjects to serve as soldiers. It is worth noting, however, that they did find that a man was more likely to accept a new point of view if both his initial attitude and the new attitude were presented in the film, and the latter was shown in some way to be superior (in other words if the film did not appear as 'propaganda' with all its undesirable connotations, but took on some semblance of rationally arguing one position over another). This simultaneously reflects the importance of ideas of the 'rational' in our culture, and the different implications of emotional and quasi-rational forms of expression.

What indirect evidence we have supports the view that emotional forms are extremely important in cinematic communication, but we are lacking in direct and convincing research to show in what ways effects are dependent on them. Strong claims are still made for the power of film, but precisely what sort of power is left rather vague. John Chittock's recent experimental study reported in *Film and Effect* is one such conceptually blurred and methodologically problematic investigation. The study is based on a classically designed experiment involving six sponsored films, ranging from the hard sell to the light entertainment prestige film. Audiences and control groups (to check for independent externally caused opinion change) were questioned before they saw the films and some time afterwards. The results

suggest a considerable swing toward the products and their sponsors in both the general audience and an audience composed of business men. However, as is noted in the report, the quantitative assessment of degree of influence is only really to establish that there *was* an effect, not the extent of such an effect. It would be dangerous to infer from the figures involved that there is a strong case for extensive effects, a case which Chittock himself, though not his colleagues, would seemingly wish to espouse.

There are several reasons for caution, a number of them involving the methodological techniques involved. The attitude scale, for example, is rather problematic. Original attitudes are scored 0, and for each changed attitude on the eight questions a score of 1 was allocated, positive or negative depending on the direction of the change. These were added together to give an attitude change score. But to add them together assumes that the degree of difference between initial and final attitudes is the same in all cases, since they are represented arithmetically by 0 and 1 and the difference between 0 and 1 is always the same. In no way can they be said to accurately represent the *extent* of opinion change. Thus the resultant measures can only be used to suggest that where the final score is not 0 there was some unspecified change. But even then there is the distinct possibility of a person who changed positively on four questions and negatively on four thereby scoring 0; in other words, someone changing all their opinions but statistically appearing to have remained the same. The irony is that such apparently 'sophisticated' methods of analysis are not at all necessary. They tell us no more than could be understood from inspection of the questionnaire items, that is, whether there is change or not. But they do give, as in much sociology and psychology, an entirely false sense of precision.

In addition, as the psychoanalyst involved in the experiment notes, we have no indication of the sort of attitudes initially involved which may have effected the receptivity of the audiences. Initial attitudes are scored 0 regardless of whether they are substantively positive, negative, or neutral. The reason given is that the research was only concerned with changes in attitude. But change *from* what *to* what is a highly pertinent question. The substantive nature of initial opinions can have crucial effects on any later changes. This research, however, is not conceptualized in such a way as to allow for such phenomena. Similar considerations apply to the sampling procedure. Some of the differences in

degree of change as between general and business audiences – assuming for the moment that we can talk about degree – may well be accounted for by the mode of selection of the general audience. All the methods used to obtain this sample – advertisements, stopping people in the street, requests to organizations and to friends of friends – although designed to ensure a non-biased sample, in fact involve a considerable degree of self-selection. It is possible, if not probable, that those who volunteered as part of the audience did so because they were interested and receptive to films anyway. They are at least distinguished from other categories of individual by agreeing to participate. The results may be based on a group of people more open to film effects than normal, and the greater changes in the general audience may be partially explicable in these terms. I use terms like *may* and *might* because I have no way of knowing. The important thing is that such loopholes do exist and that it should have been the job of the experimental design to avoid them.

Taken overall, the material reported in *Film and Effect*, might just about allow us to suggest that films have some relatively undefined effect on relatively undefined people in relatively undefined circumstances, *and nothing more*. The author remarks that ‘the positive results obtained in this experiment provide more conclusive evidence of the value of film than I originally expected.’ Either his expectations were very low or his idea of ‘conclusive evidence’ is very strange. There is so little conceptualization and analysis of the variables to be tested, so much that is methodologically problematic, that to draw such conclusions is frightening in its implications. Nor let it be thought that this particular piece of research is alone in displaying such characteristics; it merely happens to be the most recent and easily available to hand.

If we are to approach the problem of effects, to understand the process by which medium and message are related, to make meaningful statements about film as a process of communication, we need a thoroughgoing theoretical clarification of the field. We cannot hope to assess effects if we do not define closely what sort of effects we mean. Film is a highly complex medium, and the sociological and psychological variables impinging on communication compound this complexity. As Mialaret puts it: ‘We must repeatedly emphasize that this complexity keeps us from jumping to hasty interpretations and makes us conscious of how great our ignorance still is.’ We have accumulated a great deal of

haphazard knowledge in this and related fields, a total which rises daily. A brief glance at *Public Opinion Quarterly* serves to illustrate the truth of this. But in what way does opinion transmission differ from knowledge transmission? What is the threshold at which selective perception ceases to operate? How does this relate to the social factors impinging on communicator and audience? How can we analyse the 'languages' of the various media? The questions are endless, and the only way to approach them is through precise formulation, theoretical suggestion of answers, and testing. Polemical claims and indiscriminate experimentation will only lead to a greater proliferation of confused, and confusing, information.

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Three Frankheimer Films: A Sociological Approach

Paul Filmer

The strength of John Frankheimer's use of the macabre* resides in his unequivocal location of it, not in '... Ghoulies and Ghosties; and long-leggitty Beasties; and things that go bump in the night . . .', but in social relationships that must be recognizable, common and intimately known to all the individuals that compose his audiences.

The most important of such relationships are collected under the rubric of socialization, that is, the total process – a sort of sociological osmosis – whereby an individual is able to reach a self-definition compatible with membership of a society. It consists principally of the interactive relationships, of a more or less formalized kind, through which he internalizes a set of values which will enable him to undertake meaningful social relationships with his fellows.¹

Socializatory relationships are of two principal kinds: affective, or instrumental (affectively neutral). Instrumental socializatory relationships are formed specifically for the achievement of certain goals, and are often differentially beneficial to the partners. The socializatory character of the relationship of a schoolboy with his teachers, for example, is instrumental to his education and he is thus likely to benefit more from it than his teacher. Affective socializatory relationships are formed to fulfil the socio-psychic needs of those involved and tend normally to be reciprocally beneficial, e.g. parent-child relationships. Of the two kinds of relationships, the affective is more important in personality formation.

In western societies, the most important socializatory relationships take place between an individual and his

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* I use macabre here to define a depiction of common, everyday phenomena as having gruesome, grotesque or perverse qualities sufficient for them to be considered as representations of a maleficent unknown.

parents. The interrelationships involved are related in a highly complex fashion and are of a number of different types; they are thus susceptible to a number of different explanations, one of the most widely known being the Freudian theory of infantile sexuality, which purports to explain the origin of certain adult neuroses in the repression, usually by its parents, of a child's normal sexual development.² If an individual's inadequate socialization has led to an inadequate internalization of the normatively accepted social values (the most fundamental of which is, typically, the sanctity of human life) he presents the most terrifying threat to the order and stability of his society – the threat of its destruction from within by acts which undermine its ethical structure, and are able to be carried out at random and in virtual anonymity, because of his strongly apparent normality. Close analysis, through imaginative representation and reconstruction, of the perversion and repression of the crucially important relationships provides fertile material for the cinema and clearly justifies a sociological approach to its content.

From this point of view, three films, in particular, of John Frankenheimer, provide fascinating material for examination: *All Fall Down*, *Bird Man of Alcatraz*, and *The Manchurian Candidate*. All three films appear to have been made in 1962, and constitute a coherent following-through of one particular thematic element in the cinema of the macabre. Amongst the principal characters in each film are a mother and son; and the most important theme of each film lies in its attempt somehow to explain the inability of the sons to form meaningful adult social relationships in terms of abnormalities in their relationships with their mothers.

Barry Barry Willer (Warren Beaty) in *All Fall Down* is the estranged, elder son of a liberal-progressive father, Ralph (Karl Malden), and a domineering, hectoring mother, Annabel (Angela Lansbury). The film opens with his brother, Clinton, arriving in a small Californian coastal town, the last known whereabouts of Barry Barry, to invest his vacation-work savings in a business which Barry Barry wants to start. The money is used instead to bail Barry Barry out of jail, where he has been imprisoned for hitting his girlfriend, a local saloon hostess. Clinton continues to idolize Barry Barry, in spite of the sordidness of his brother's environment, which continually seems to shock him; and he is impressed by the ease with which his idol is picked-up, first by two girls in a convertible, then later in a bar, by a

wealthy, middle-aged woman, from whom Barry Barry requests money in order to send Clinton home. At home, Clinton does not go back to school, but sits around, eavesdropping on his parents' conversation which consists of Annabel's conviction of his (Clinton's) abnormality, and his need for a psychiatrist; her dislike of Ralph's drinking and her concern that Barry Barry should return home. Ralph disagrees with her on all these matters and spends most of his time drinking in his study, where partly emptied bottles of whisky are secreted.

Annabel expects Barry Barry to return home for Christmas. He is seen working in a small-town filling station far away. Unable to afford the fare, he allows himself to be persuaded to act as 'chauffeur' to a plain young woman. On Christmas Eve they argue in a bar and Barry Barry hits her. He is arrested and in the early hours of Christmas Day telephones Ralph to wire the money for his bail. Annabel speaks to him briefly over the phone, and though the expected visit has not taken place, she seems content at having had some contact with Barry Barry. Earlier in the same evening, Barry Barry has viciously smashed a shop-window model of the Nativity – a reaction to the 'ideal' family, explainable in terms, perhaps, of the abnormalities of his own.

During the evening before Christmas, Annabel is shown anticipating Barry Barry's arrival. As it becomes increasingly evident that he is unlikely to appear, her frustrated hopes are turned bitterly against Ralph's liberal humanitarianism. He returns home, slightly drunk, with three bizarre tramps whom he presents hilariously to Annabel and Clinton as if they were the three kings of the Nativity. He announces that they are to spend Christmas as his guests, instructs Annabel to get them food and drinks and warns her not to turn them away. She returns with the refreshments, but coolly offers each tramp an alternative to spending Christmas in her home – 'a crisp, new ten-dollar bill.' With the odd, abashed glance towards Ralph they all accept the money and leave. By her action Annabel immediately trivializes and undermines Ralph's attempt to give a humanitarian meaning to Christmas, maintaining her view of it as a bourgeois celebration of family unity. In the absence of Barry Barry and in the light of his destruction of the Nativity model, her attitude can only be seen as hypocritical. This is a key scene in the film, for Frankenheimer shows the source of Annabel's domination over Ralph. It is also exemplified in her conviction that Clinton is 'retarded' in the face of



All Fall Down:
Annabel's
domination
over Ralph

Ralph's gentle insistence that he should be allowed to grow up with as little interference as possible. For Ralph, drinking is a form of retreat from a relationship which no longer appears to have any meaning for him. Clinton's obsessive eavesdropping and writing may be partially explained in the same way. Annabel is obsessed with Barry Barry (about whom Ralph is suggestively ambivalent, referring to him half-jokingly as a 'monster' throughout most of the film). Her relationships with Ralph and Clinton seem almost entirely instrumental, underlined as such by the way in which she is continually shown performing menial tasks for them like cooking or doing their laundry. Her criticisms of them both stem from their failure to fulfil instrumental needs for her. Clinton reflects no credit on her as a son; Ralph is, therefore, a failure as a father, and, because he does not keep her in the style she would like, also as a husband. Barry Barry, however, in his absence, can be represented to neighbours and relatives as a success, and thus a credit to her.

He does return home the following summer, telling Clinton that he has for some months been living on a nearby orchard of which he is a part-owner. He drives Clinton out to it, where, in a sordid shack, he is introduced to Barry Barry's partner, who extricates himself from a couple of semi-

clothed tarts to shake hands. The partnership is explained by Barry Barry as 'he has the orchard, I get the girls.' The debauched setting is strongly reminiscent of the beginning of the film in the Californian saloon where Clinton first learns that Barry Barry is in jail. Whilst at the orchard, Barry Barry shows Clinton his hoard of women's jewellery, bank notes and a gun, which he has stolen or been given by women. He is adamant in his refusal to return to live in the stultifyingly affectionate atmosphere that his mother maintains at home. He had barely spoken to her before taking Clinton out to the orchard. Yet the contrast between the enervating squalor in which Barry Barry lives and the relatively bright orderliness of his family's home, effectively puts the question of whether or not Barry Barry's rejection of the latter is constructive. He is not able to form other than purely instrumental relationships with others in his mother's absence, since her dominating influence still stifles and overwhelms him. Clinton's idolization of his brother still persists, but not untainted; for the California episode can no longer be dismissed as an isolated behavioural aberration, since it is repeated here several months later, and Barry Barry has again been jailed in the intervening period for hitting another woman. The point is made, rather heavily, when Barry Barry brutally pushes away the unwanted attentions of one of the girls in the shack.

Yet Barry Barry does begin to live at home again after meeting an attractive cousin (Eva Marie Saint). Clinton has already met her on a previous visit and developed an adolescent crush on her, to which she responds with a joking, yet cloying affection, telling him 'you're my guy' in a way that appears exaggeratedly maternal and is thus reminiscent of Annabel's occasional references to Barry Barry as 'my baby.' She is over thirty and, though attractive, still a spinster. She has been engaged, but tells Annabel that her fiancé killed himself, for which she feels responsible, though, she says, she made no excessive demands on him. Annabel, of course, has praised Barry Barry to her, ironically in the light of later events, as 'the real lady-killer of the family.' A mutual attraction quickly develops between them. Once this is evident, Annabel admits to Ralph that she can't help feeling resentful. Yet she says nothing of this to Barry Barry, presumably from fear of driving him away again.

Predictably, Barry Barry's cousin becomes pregnant. When she confronts him with this, he insists at first that it cannot be

him. In the face of her outrage he admits responsibility, but at the same time accuses her of being primarily responsible, claiming that she wanted it to happen. Perversely, he seems to regard it as an attempt by her to dominate him as his mother has done in the past. She insists, however, that if he does not wish to marry her she will not expect it of him. The scene takes place in Ralph's study late at night, and is observed through the window by Clinton. Barry Barry leaves, and his cousin, after rushing after him into torrential rain, returns to the house, packs a case and leaves in tears, telling Clinton as she drives away that he is still her guy. Later, Ralph, Annabel and Clinton are woken with the news of her death in a car smash. Ralph once again refers to Barry Barry as a monster, but on this occasion there is neither levity nor affection in his voice. Barry Barry has almost literally become the real lady-killer of the family. Later, Clinton goes to the orchard, takes Barry Barry's gun from its hiding place, conceals himself and waits to shoot his brother. Confronted with the wretched prospect of him, however, Clinton rejects Barry Barry's assertion that he really loved his cousin, and dismisses him as pathetic. The hold of hero-worship – potentially as stifling and retarding as that of Annabel over Barry Barry himself – is finally broken, and Clinton leaves the orchard (where on his first visit he had been shocked by Barry Barry telling him that life was hateful) as, rather over-symbolically, dawn breaks.

Seen as a kind of contemporary morality play, centring on extremely abnormal versions of everyday, normatively experienced interactive relationships, particularly familial and sexual relationships (and it is difficult to see it as anything else), the film makes its point by examining the macabre consequences of the implied grotesqueness of Barry Barry's relationship with his mother. He is shown as ultimately incapable of forming affective relationships. His relationships with women are clearly instrumental, with one possible exception, in providing him with sexual satisfaction. As soon as they involve demands upon him (the saloon hostess tells Clinton she is Barry Barry's fiancée; the girl he hits in the bar has asked him to pay more attention to her) they are terminated brutally. He enjoys, in the film, virtually no interactive relationship at all with his mother; the only occasion on which he exchanges more than a few words with her ends with him cursing her at the top of his voice. Yet the whole film is overshadowed by her dominance of him as a child and her excessive expectations and assur-

ances of his success, all of which caused him to leave home to try and escape. Barry Barry's brutality to women in the film might be meaningfully interpreted as a means of symbolically punishing his mother, thus giving the relationships a further instrumentality. The one possible exception to this norm of instrumentality is his relationship with his cousin. Until the evening on which she informs Barry Barry of her pregnancy, it seems to be becoming affective for him as undoubtedly it is to her. Yet the fact of her pregnancy, and his admission of responsibility for it, precipitates a need for a minimum reciprocity from him in facing the consequences of this admission, which, if given, would firmly establish the affectivity of the relationship. In not giving it, Barry Barry invalidates his subsequent claim that he really loved the woman, and thus shows the relationship to have been instrumental for him after all.

Nor are his other relationships qualitatively different from those he forms with women. Ralph and Clinton are both useful at different times in bailing him out of jail. His business partner 'has the orchard,' he 'gets the girls' – though that relationship does have a degree of reciprocity. Annabel and Ralph are shocked by the 'monster' that they have created: Annabel through her unconsciously stifling, possessive affection; Ralph through his ineffectuality and his retreat in the face of his wife's erosion of his moral authority. Barry Barry's attempt to escape from the consequences of his perverse socialization by physical separation is a sham, because, when in difficulties, he still calls his family long-distance to help. It is also doomed to failure, because the consequences are manifested in his inability to form other than instrumentally interactive social relationships. Thus, his rejection of his mother's example of instrumentality is only effectively tested after he has returned home, by the challenging possibility of an affective relationship with his cousin.

This film contains the same principal concern of the two films mentioned earlier that were made in the same year. Like Barry Barry Willer, both Raymond Shaw (Laurence Harvey) in *The Manchurian Candidate* and Robert Stroud (Burt Lancaster) in *Bird Man of Alcatraz* try to break out of the straitjacket of anti-social behaviour imposed on them as adults by their grotesque socializatory relationships with their mothers. Barry Barry is the least successful, failing completely. Raymond Shaw at least realizes the cause of his inability to formulate meaningful social relationships, but

not until after he has brutally murdered his wife and father-in-law, the two people most important to him and amongst the few with whom he has ever enjoyed affective relationships. The killings are on the subliminally communicated instructions of his mother (played again by Angela Lansbury – a similarity with *All Fall Down* which is not coincidence). She is also a Communist agent, controlling a trained assassin who has been brainwashed to obey her instructions to kill the political opponents of her husband, an obscure and vulgar U.S. senator with aspirations to the Presidency, and behind whom she is the motivating force. Her trained assassin turns out, hideously, to be Raymond, whose platoon were all brainwashed after being ambushed and captured on active service in Korea. He was chosen to be the assassin since he was the best shot. His fellow soldiers were trained to eulogise him affectionately and his commanding officer is instructed to cite him for the Congressional Medal of Honour – America's highest award for gallantry. There is a macabre humour in the choice of Raymond, for he is the most unpopular and unfriendly member of the platoon. His personality has already been shown as aloof, stern and unyielding, and may be seen as a function of his relationship with his mother – a flashback sequence, later in the film, shows her terminating a youthful love affair with Jocie Jordan (Janet Leigh) by vicious deceit, because Jocie's father is a political opponent of her husband, Raymond's step-father. It is when Raymond later resurrects his relationship with Jocie and marries her, that he is 'programmed' by his mother to assassinate her father. (Her ability to pervert the normal formation of his personality is doubled by her power to activate his brainwashed subconscious.) Jocie sees him do so, and he is obliged to kill her, too. He is similarly instructed to kill the presidential nominee of his step-father's party at the forthcoming convention, so that the nomination will revert to his step-father, who already has the vice-presidential nomination as a direct result of the elimination of his principal opponent, Jocie's father. But he is counter-programmed successfully, reacts against his original instructions, shoots his mother and step-father instead, and finally commits suicide. The realization of his macabre, if involuntary, inhumanity comes to Shaw too late to enable him to make any reparation for what it has made him do. Yet his suicide cannot be seen simply as a negative act, for it is shown as the logical consequence of his acceptance of the moral responsibilities of which the realization of his inhumanity makes him aware.

The assassination of
Angela Lansbury -
*The Manchurian
Candidate*



Superficially it might appear reasonable to argue that if an individual's adult social behaviour has destructive social consequences as a result of abnormal socialization, then he cannot be held responsible for them. Instead, the wider society might hold responsible the adults involved in the abnormalities, and the society itself, for permitting them. Yet Frankenheimer seems to me to reject this crude determinism as an adequate explanation of his hero's behaviour, by reasoning analogous to that of the existentialist critique of psycho-analytic determinism. Briefly, the critique argues that if there is any meaning to the concept of individuality, with its concomitant idea of autonomy, then a deterministic explanation or justification of the behaviour of an individual, will not be a sufficient one, as vulgar Freudians, though certainly not Freud himself, might argue. For if the individual is held to be autonomous, that is, a self-consistent moral entity, a deterministic explanation of his actions will not

exonerate him from responsibility for their moral consequences. This conception of the individual seems to be the ideal of much important western ethico-philosophical thought, though it is seldom realized in institutionalized ethical codes.

It is this disjunction between ideal and reality, together with the possibility of their reconciliation, that is most effectively expressed by Frankenheimer in *Bird Man of Alcatraz*.

Robert Stroud is serving a life sentence for committing two murders. Finding a storm-orphaned fledgling in the prison exercise yard, he takes it back to his cell for shelter, trains it and, subsequently, manages to acquire enough other birds to create a small aviary. He becomes an expert in ornithological medicine. The fierce attachment that Stroud develops to his birds parallels his deprivation of normal social inter-relationships, which is partly due to his institutionalization, but is also partly self-imposed because of his inability to form and maintain them. His only permanent relationship with another human being throughout the early part of the film is with his mother, who makes occasional visits to him. It is shown, from his point of view, as clearly affective from the violent way in which he reacts to one fellow-prisoner's mere examination of her photograph, to another's disparaging remarks about her, and finally by his murder of the guard who, simply by obeying prison rules and reporting the latter incident, prevents him from seeing his mother after she has made the long journey from Alaska to visit him. By the same token of violence, the relationship is shown to be highly abnormal. It is solely through his mother's 'eleventh hour' plea to the President's wife, of the efficacy of which Stroud was completely sceptical, that his death sentence is commuted to life imprisonment. This might suggest the reciprocal affectivity of the relationship, but for the hints given later in the film of Stroud's reasons for the murder which first caused his imprisonment. He apparently beat a woman (a prostitute?) so severely that she died. The suggestion is that his mother in some way helped to cause this action – perhaps by manifesting the jealousy of a widowed mother in danger of losing her only son to another woman. Frankenheimer does not introduce sufficient information about Stroud's original crime to enable any clear understanding of it to be formulated.³

Once Stroud's sentence is commuted to life, it slowly becomes clear that his mother regards her relationship to

him as purely instrumental in defining a role for her – an ageing, lonely woman (whether she is widowed, or was never married is also not made clear), with a solitary, institutionalized, adult son. It is his institutionalization that enables him to perpetuate the dominant parental role. The challenge to her authority comes with the meeting between Stroud, after he has become a ‘bird doctor’ with a national reputation, and Mrs. Stella Johnson, a widow with whom he enters into a business partnership to manufacture bird specifics, and whom he subsequently marries, ostensibly to prevent being moved to another prison and thus lose both his business and his pets. A relationship, which is normally expected to be especially affective, is here presented as extremely strange in its distinct instrumentality. Yet an immediate rapport exists between Stroud and Stella, carrying with it the suggestion that, had they met under less peculiar circumstances, an affective relationship might easily have developed – and may still do so.

Thus, it is through the development of Stroud’s relationship with Stella into one of reciprocal, mutual interest and concern that the grotesqueness of his relationship with his mother is revealed. She has warned Stroud, on completely unreasonable grounds, against Stella: ‘All your troubles started with that other woman in Alaska. . . . She’s a disaster,

Birdman of Alcatraz:
the burning of the
photograph



she'll bring you nothing but trouble.' Stroud tells his mother that she acts as if she wants him in jail for all time, an intuition which is confirmed when his mother refuses to support an application for parole, that Stella has worked hard to prepare: 'My son is where he belongs,' she tells a newspaperman. 'I'd rather have him where I know he's safe.' On reading of his mother's actions, Stroud remarks: 'When a mother in nature is upset, she eats her young.' He then burns her photograph.

Throughout the remainder of the film, Stroud behaves positively towards others in a way, and to an extent, that he has never done before. Having shaken off the dominating influence of his mother, he develops reciprocal and generally affective relationships, not only with Stella, but also with his fellow-prisoners and some of the prison officials. The final testimony of his ability to sustain such relationships by making meaningful contributions to them is in his instruction to Stella to give him up, and to lead a life of her own, not one in thrall to his confinement. Unlike Barry Barry, in *All Fall Down*, Stroud's ability to form normal human relationships does not appear to have been ruined by his mother's dominance, because he has finally rejected as inhuman the way in which she has allowed her affection for him, in its extreme instrumentality for her, to repress his development into a mature, autonomous and responsible individual. (He has compared her directly with 'a mother in nature,' an animal.) In rejecting his mother, and in showing more concern for Stella's future than for his own, he is for the first time accepting responsibility for his crimes – though not the nullifying corollary that the punishment he is still undergoing (Stroud's life sentence is quite literally that) is necessarily commensurate with them. He accepts the sentence as socially prescribed and thus, to an extent, inevitable. For Stroud has now espoused the wider humanitarian ideals of his society, whilst retaining his prerogative as an individual to reject their imperfect, inhumane institutionalization as exemplified by the penal system.

In the opening sequence of the film, Stroud is shown as an exceptionally violent man. Yet his violence is treated with a certain ambiguity by Frankenheimer; it is not easy to construe it as an anti-social activity, since its goal is undoubtedly humane. The overcrowded railway truck in which he and other prisoners are being transported to jail is stiflingly hot. On the refusal of one of the guards to open a window to let in some air, Stroud smashes it instead. Inevitably he is told

by the governor (Karl Malden) on arrival at the jail, that his action will be punished by the withdrawal of privileges for a period. This governor subsequently reappears as a prison commissioner and finally as governor of the new Alcatraz prison, where he confiscates as seditious a critical history of American penology which Stroud, an old man by now and deprived of his birds, has occupied his time at Alcatraz in writing. Stroud's work exposes the often bestial inhumanity of the retributive penology which, in its more recent forms, he has suffered himself. He argues that retribution is a gruesome perversion of normal social relationships, because when embodied in penal institutions it leads to the treatment of human beings as animals, and dehumanizes them by depriving them of anything approaching a normal social environment. Hence it is not necessarily surprising that many released prisoners continue to behave in an anti-social fashion. His argument is also borne out by sociological evidence on the effects of institutionalization.⁴ Yet it is imprisonment that has humanized Stroud himself; and this is not necessarily a paradox, for it was an effective way of removing him from everyday exposure to his mother's overweening dominance and, perhaps, of giving a man of such immense intellect, sufficient opportunity for self-contemplation to guarantee his eventual maturity. That an experience so hideously abnormal, much of it spent in solitary confinement, should yield such a positive result does not only underline the magnitude of Stroud's individual achievement. It points also to the terrifying consequences, of which his brutal crimes might have been only the beginning, that can ensue from an ordinary and universally necessary relationship gone awry.

Such relationships in their normatively experienced form are, by definition, known intimately to a cinema audience. Thus a high degree of identification with their counterparts in the microcosm of the film is possible, even in the perverse form in which Frankenheimer eventually reveals them. The key to these films lies in the way in which they all lead the individual viewer, through their principal characters, back into himself as the source of the maleficent unknown. Presented with the highly plausible, abnormal initial conditions of the socialization of Frankenheimer's heroes, his audiences can but wonder whether they themselves share their potential for vicious, inhuman and anti-social activity.

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3. This seems to be a recurrent problem in the interpretation of Frankenheimer's films; see e.g. Gordon Gow: *Suspense in the Movies*, A. Zwemmer, Ltd., 1968, pp. 138-9 on 'Seconds'.
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Reviews

Books

JULIE ANDREWS

John Cottrell. *Mayflower*. 5s.

VERONICA

Veronica Lake with Donald Bain. *W. H. Allen*, 36s.

BEST MOVIE STORIES

Ed. Guy Slater. *Faber and Faber*. 25s.

THE MOVIEMAKER

Herbert Kastle. *W. H. Allen*. 35s.

THE BEAUTIFUL COUPLE

William Woolfolk. *W. H. Allen*. 30s.

SCRATCH AN ACTOR

Sheilah Graham. *W. H. Allen*. 36s.

NORMA JEAN

Fred Lawrence Guiles, *W. H. Allen*, 42s.

Despite the diminished role of the big studios and the so-called break-up of the star system, the amorphous Hollywood myth continues to be nourished; 'autobiography' and 'biography,' novel and gossip column are channels through which old scandals are refurbished and elaborated and new legends emerge. No new ground is broken in the latest assortment of such literature. No new figures present themselves as possible challengers for the key roles ascribed to stars such as Humphrey Bogart and Errol Flynn, Marilyn Monroe or Elizabeth Taylor. Julie Andrews may be a top box-office draw but her biographer, John Cottrell and the columnist Sheilah Graham find themselves in a cul-de-sac when attempting to describe the star or to analyse her appeal. Her success post-dates the legendary era of Hollywood, enlivened as it was largely by conflict, romance and sybaritic life amongst stars and moguls. Her rise to stardom is shown

Margaret Tarrett
lectures on film at
Hornsey College of
Art, and is on the
lecture panel of the
BFI

in curious isolation and few famous names add to its lustre. The only controversy concerns the sincerity of her 'good sport' attitude towards her rival Audrey Hepburn at the time when Audrey was cast as Eliza Dolittle instead of Julie and when Julie received an Oscar for her performance in *Mary Poppins*, whilst Audrey Hepburn did not even receive a nomination for *My Fair Lady*. Cottrell accepts her attitude as one of generosity. Sheilah Graham suspects a degree of bitchiness.

The tactful biography is less compulsive reading than the 'frank' ghosted autobiography which Veronica Lake insists must be regarded as her authentic mouthpiece. Such autobiographies by female stars at least, appear to be evolving their own great tradition. *Veronica* is written with a consciousness of Bette Davis's *The Lonely Life* and Hedy Lamarr's *Ecstasy and Me*. Reference is made to both and Veronica Lake carves a path for herself somewhere between the bitterness of actress Davis, convinced of the incompatibility of marriage and career, and the Fanny Hill frolics of screen courtesan Lamarr. The former Connie Ockleman regards Veronica Lake as the major role which the studios assigned her. The most interesting element in the book concerns her relationship to this role in anecdotes of the public, unable to believe it is seeing her in the flesh, remarking: 'There's Veronica Lake junior.' She describes the time when, her career apparently finished, she worked as a waitress in a bar where her old films were being shown on television one weekend. The clients, knowing her identity, sat engrossed in the screen while the boss fumed at the bad business he was doing. The story – a subject of legend – was mentioned without names by Bette Davis. The new lease of life which the television companies' presentation of old films may give to an ageing actress's reputation has become an integral part of the myth and is a key factor in *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane*. Veronica Lake winces at playing the part of a faded film actress on the stage – a part she takes largely through financial incentive. Like Hedy Lamarr, she describes her fall to poverty, but sees the possibility of resuscitating her career in late middle age through the horror film medium exploited by Bette Davis, Joan Crawford and Olivia de Havilland, although such attempts appear to have been largely abortive on her part.

As in the other autobiographies information about productions is minimal. The subject is that of living the role of publicly accepted sexual phenomenon.

The latest biography to join the already voluminous literature surrounding Marilyn Monroe is also concerned with this theme. Whereas Veronica Lake sees herself as a piece of Hollywood merchandise, Fred Lawrence Guiles plays down the role of studio publicity in creating his heroine. In the blurb it is claimed that the author seeks to penetrate behind the myth. The book is littered with acknowledgements and has an air of scholarship but for all this, the myth remains intact. Monroe is presented as a screen heroine in her own right as opposed to a publicity invention such as Sheree North – Fox’s attempt at a replacement for its temperamental star in *How To Be Very Very Popular*. Guiles has his own ideas on such controversial details as whether the famous hair was straight or not (naturally curly Sheila Graham: ‘straight’ Guiles) or what she really wore for her first meeting with drama coach Natasha Lytess (‘white tailored slacks and a white shirt tied around the middle’ [Maurice Zolotow]: a ‘knitted red-wool hip-clinging dress that was cut too low’ [Guiles]). Such discrepancies only serve to reinforce the legend – a legend which the star herself grew to believe when years later she endorsed what was originally a publicity stunt by her agent, Emmeline Snively, claiming Howard Hughes, recovering from a plane crash, had taken an interest in Marilyn’s photograph on the cover of *Laff Magazine*. This story led to her first screen test. Her attitude seems close to the famous line from *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*: ‘When the legend becomes the fact, print the legend.’ She was seen by many including Billy Wilder as the successor to Jean Harlow. Monroe’s myth has a similar pattern. Indeed films such as *The Goddess* and *Harlow* give an amalgamated history of the two. For all its aspirations to clarification of her history this biography only confirms her myth.

The two Hollywood novels and the collection of short stories are tedious in comparison. With a breezy contempt for literary form or context, *Best Movie Stories* carries single chapters from novels such as *Prater Violet* and *Inside Daisy Clover* with only the barest acknowledgement of their origins in a list tucked away at the back. The collection is weak in that it relies on unity of subject matter alone and shows little imagination in its choice. Fitzgerald, for instance, is represented by a run of the mill ‘Pat Hobby’ incident. *The Movie-maker* and *The Beautiful Couple*, almost identical in size and format, are full-length exposures of a well-trodden Hollywood scene. *The Movie-maker* concerns the fortunes of a major film producer engaged in promoting an epic to out-

epic *Birth of a Nation*. Superficially styled on the model of Dos Passos's *U.S.A.*, it is crammed with stereotypes we recognize at once – the novelist from the East, turned hack, seeking his fortune in Hollywood; the neurotic Siren; the has-been star, begging for work, etc. These have been portrayed with less pretension and quite as much success in Richard Brooks's comparable novel *The Producer*. This updated rehash does not enrich the iconography of the Hollywood novel. *The Beautiful Couple* is scarcely more rewarding. It appears to be based in some degree on the Elizabeth Taylor legend. The heroine is an erotic child star whose film career continues into her adult life. The studio engineers a publicity romance for her with a Korea War hero. She retains her virginity for a long time; has a weight problem; is cast in a film intended to outstrip *Giant*; and is involved in a stormy relationship with a philandering Irish film star with pretensions as an actor and a love of the bottle. Nationality apart, he is close to Sheilah Graham's portrait of Richard Burton. The novel also contains an unmistakable cameo of Marlon Brando. What differentiates these novels from classics of the genre such as *The Last Tycoon*, *What Makes Sammy Run* or *The Day of the Locust* is their invitation to bask vicariously in a make-believe world masked only by a thin veneer of respectable cynicism. Such novels have less in common with the writing of Scott Fitzgerald than with the gossip of Sheilah Graham (herself, as the basis for Kathleen in *The Last Tycoon*, part of the myth of Hollywood, as she reminds us obliquely in her references to Fitzgerald). Sheilah Graham is a myth builder *par excellence*. Gathering together anecdote and rumour ('Some of Richard's acquaintances believe . . .'; 'Every one with whom I spent long hours agreed that Brando is self-destructive'; 'Shirley has a reputation for being unconventional herself – how true, I wouldn't know,') she categorizes her subjects with a curious mixture of love and hate. – 'The Iron Butterfly' (Julie Andrews); 'Fatty' (Elizabeth Taylor); 'The Terrible Tempered Twins' (Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas). Her portrait of Cary Grant, noted for his parsimony and for his compulsive attraction towards the wife from whom he is separated, parallels the kind of film role with which he is particularly associated, like *His Girl Friday* or *The Awful Truth*. Sheilah Graham's anecdote concerning Grant's reluctance to pay a restaurant bill if he could possibly evade it, is reflected in the incident in *His Girl Friday*, where, foiled in an attempt to manoeuvre Ralph Bellamy into paying the bill, he snatches the small change in Bellamy's hand for the tip. Sheilah Graham

implies that she herself may be partly responsible for this mythic reputation when she claims: 'I, too, have had my fights with Mr. Grant. In my early years in Hollywood, when I was more slashing than I am now, I needled Cary in print every time I heard a new story of his parsimony. It reached a point during *Gunga Din* in 1939 that Cary called me and told me off for five minutes without pausing for breath.' Like Messrs. Kastle and Woolfolk, one feels that Sheila Graham's analysis of the origins of the legends she describes is rudimentary. Her explanation that Grant's meanness is caused by a fear of poverty is overshadowed by her delighted re-emphasis of this aspect of his reputation. For all her strictures on Elizabeth Taylor's appearance: 'The Duchess looked elegant, Elizabeth like a woman who had made it rich and was wearing all her possessions on her ample back,' she is also very much part of the world of the dazzled fan as she secretly tries on 'Elizabeth's emeralds' brought to her hotel room by 'two of the Burton minions.' Her role in its mixture of familiarity and awe is analogous to that of the paid guide conducting visitors round a stately home.

This chunk of Hollywoodiana reminds us that the function of such writing, whatever the form it takes, appears to be that of escapist myth building. It is assumed that we will see through the meretricious glamour surrounding the film industry, but we will also retain an insatiable desire for accounts of luxury and uninhibited sexual encounters.

MARGARET TARRATT

BUSTER KEATON

David Robinson, *Secker & Warberg*, 15s.

Mr. Robinson's book goes part of the way towards filling the need for a critical study of Keaton's work. For, along with Rudi Blesh's *Keaton*, a detailed and unusually accurate biography, it provides most of the available source material needed for such a study. Mr. Robinson has in fact done the spade-work and, although it is not meant to sound disparaging, it is worth repeating that work of any sort is so scant on the early comic stars that a book like this is extremely valuable simply by virtue of its rareness.

His approach is straightforwardly chronological. Thus, after a brief introduction, in the second chapter, 'Vaude-

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ville,' there is an account of Keaton's early life and background, not in Blesh's detail, but chosen rather to point up the influences on him which made it inevitable that he should spend his life in show-business doing some sort of comic-acrobat work.

Born in 1895 in a theatrical lodging house, he joined the family comic acrobat act *three* years later, learning intuitively a whole repertory of falls while still young enough to make them second nature to him.

He was no mere tumbler, however, and in fact divined from an early age what made people laugh: '... if I laughed at what I did, the audience didn't ... The more serious I turned the bigger laugh I could get. So at the time I went into pictures, that was automatic – I didn't even know I was doing it.' He did, however, know what he was doing when he entered movies in 1917 for \$40 a week as opposed to the \$300 a week offered to him for a tour.

A life-time spent absorbing technique meant that once in front of the cameras Keaton had nothing new to learn, and could thus devote his time to learning the mechanics of the new medium and refining his material for it.

This he did for six years – working up to 1919 in Roscoe (Fatty) Arbuckle's studios and then in his own – making thirty-nine shorts rarely repeating a situation, always revising and refining a gag. Many of these shorts have disappeared, but on those that remain Mr. Robinson imposes the treatment which he is to use on all of Keaton's extant work: viz. to describe the film in reasonable detail and then to comment on certain gags, camera-trickery, etc. It's not an exciting critical approach, but unfortunately it's a necessary one since many readers will not have seen the films.

Thus the various Keaton characteristics are enumerated: his ability as an actor (the same qualities are found in *different* character creations, cf. Chaplin); his fondness for railways and water; the sheer daring of some of his feats shot in single takes without any possibility of faking; the converse delight in opening shots in which the camera tracks back to reveal that things are not what they at first seemed; and, overall, a style of comedy which is realistic and logical, possessing little of the Sennett defiance of natural laws.

In so far as the author has a stated thesis, this seems to be where Mr. Robinson finds Keaton's greatness: eschewing camera tricks, he stares at the real world, lengthily and

honestly, and tries to come to terms with the myriad problems that present themselves to him.

Mr. Robinson's treatment of the feature films, begun in 1923, essentially develops this pattern. There are no great insights, but plenty of useful information: shot-by-shot breakdowns of sequences in *The Three Ages* and *Our Hospitality*; examples of Keaton's perfectionism – seventy-six takes to get a trajectory gag right; and explanations of his few celebrated trick sequences such as the one in *Sherlock Junior* in which Keaton remains in a constant position in a series of changing scenes.

It is then a valuable book, although it does not go far enough. The tantalizing references to Keaton's unhappy marriage to Natalie Talmadge and the effects it may have had on his artistic career need either elaborating or excising, as does the fleeting mention of the fact that Keaton was only really successful working in the total freedom given to him first by Roscoe Arbuckle, and then by Joseph Schenck, and that his talent rapidly withered when he became caught up in the MGM stable in 1928–9.

More important omissions are when one feels that Mr. Robinson is about to say something really interesting and provocative which never materializes. He mentions, for example, the surreal element in Keaton – 'that most realistic and logical of comedians' – as manifested in the ending of *Steam Boat Bill Jr.* when after the hurricane 'the people of his (Bill's) life come floating along the river, on their personal ruins.' The point, however, is not developed; examples are not given from other films, and no attempt is made to square this element which is, at first sight, incompatible with Keaton's stated aim of: 'Get a laugh, and don't be too ridiculous.'

JIM COOK

MICHAEL BALCON PRESENTS . . . A LIFETIME OF FILMS

Michael Balcon. *Hutchinson & Co. Ltd.* 50s.

Sir Michael Balcon's autobiography is an essential work for anyone who wishes to understand the evolution of the British cinema. Its author was a key figure in the industry, deeply bound up with its problems, from the early twenties, when he set out on his career with a capital of £200, up to the

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sixties and the controversy over the policy and ownership of British Lion. He has had a quite unique vantage point from which to view the development of the British cinema and though he does not give us any startling revelations, he is a modest and scrupulously honest guide to forty years of achievement and frustration. In this connection Balcon's lack of personal creativity helps him present an unbiased picture. From his own account he seems never to have had the slightest urge to direct a film himself or even to impose his own personal views or interpretations on his directors. As a producer, he has always worked through collaboration, not coercion, finding the particular satisfactions of this kind of approach totally adequate. This autobiography is a benign work, for Balcon looks back with evident affection on the personalities and achievements of the dozens of men with whom he has worked. It is a plain book, with few striking anecdotes or controversial points, and the main interest and value it has for the student of the British cinema lie in the author's basic (and often unexamined) assumptions about the film medium and the relationship of film and audience. These tell us a great deal about why the British cinema is what it is. The following is an attempt to look at the British cinema as it emerges in Balcon's portrayal and leaves aside the second main problem, that of testing the validity of the author's views in the light of other available evidence.

What kind of picture does then emerge? Balcon makes clear that there has been one dominant impulse in all his years as a film producer. His ruling passion, he tells us, 'has always been the building up of a native industry with its roots firmly planted in the soil of this country' (p. 48). In the foreword he describes himself as one of a number of people dedicated to making British film production 'a viable and significant part of our national life' (p. xiv). The means to achieve this he saw as the studio system which, as his work at Ealing indicates, would allow both the maintenance of a consistent output and the achievement of an independent 'flavour' or style of film-making. The principal obstacle he encountered in the pursuit of his objectives was the problem of finance, which invariably implied the influence of American investment. When he entered the industry in 1921, Americans dominated ninety per cent of the British cinema and when he came to write his memoirs almost fifty years later, the situation was identical. In the course of his career Balcon tried numerous expedients, from importing Hollywood stars into British films in the twenties, to working for MGM

in Britain in the thirties, but none has proved satisfactory. Against all his efforts, the power of money has eventually won out.

The persistence of American dominance is paralleled by the recurrence of other features and attitudes in the forty years or so covered by the book. It is hardly surprising that during Balcon's first years as a producer the British were unable to compete with the Americans for, as he himself admits, in retrospect they were all 'somewhat amateur' at their jobs between 1922 and 1929 (p. 50). This amateurishness – and the charge is still raised against the British cinema as the recent controversial article by John Russell Taylor shows – became apparent in quite a number of ways. Then, even more apparently than now, they followed popular taste instead of trying to mould it: 'We were in the business of giving the public what it seemed to want in entertainment. We did not talk about art or social significance.' (p. 27.)

By his own account the British cinema of the late twenties was as irrelevant to the needs of the time as the contemporary mindless and escapist cinema of Mussolini's Italy. Balcon himself admits that 'scholars of the future . . . will doubtless marvel that film producers during the years which saw women in Britain enfranchised, the American slump and Wall Street crash, soon to be followed by our own "Hungry Thirties," were making silent films on themes so little influenced by the march of world events. Truly we were operating in a vacuum, making our contribution to the provision of what was no more than entertainment opium for the masses . . .' (p. 32–33).

But it was not only a sense of social purpose which was lacking, there was also a failure to come to terms with the qualities of the medium as such – an attitude all too prevalent in the contemporary British cinema. Indeed, if one substitutes the name of John Osborne for that of Noël Coward, some of Balcon's strictures on the late silent film are not without their relevance to the Woodfall era: 'In the twenties we were to a great extent mentally "stagebound." We looked to the theatre for much of our material and our early films would certainly now be called stagey. It was no doubt wrong of us to seek to bask in the reflected glory of people like Noël Coward; we followed trends and did not try to make them.' (p. 27.) As Tony Richardson gave us *Look Back in Anger* instead of *Hiroshima Mon Amour* in 1959, so Balcon's company used the opportunities offered by sound to make

Journey's End and not *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Given this quite false estimate of the relationship of film and theatre, it is hardly surprising that an art form that gave the world *The Battleship Potemkin* and *Sunrise, Greed* and *The General* should be casually dismissed by Balcon: 'Silent films were an art form *manque*; no more.' (p. 33.)

The thirties too, despite the varied efforts of Hitchcock and Jessie Matthews, fail to come alive as a period of real creative awareness from the standpoint that Balcon adopts. But once more – and this is the value of the book – he shows a retrospective awareness of what was lacking. He writes: 'It is puzzling to me now in retrospect that none of my films . . . in any way reflected the despair of the times in which we were living. On my bookshelves to this day I find "The Town that was Murdered" by Ellen Wilkinson, and all the other Left Book Club publications, but little of their influence is reflected in the films we were making. It was not until 1939 that I realized the place of film in society, and then perhaps insufficiently.' (pp. 41–42.) To how much British cinema does this kind of reservation apply? From the general air of honest mediocrity in the thirties only one man emerges as a real artist – 'a great man, an original, a man of genius' (p. 68) – and this is inevitably not an Englishman, but Robert Flaherty, whose *Man of Aran* Balcon helped to finance.

The key period for an evaluation of Balcon – and in a very real sense of the British approach to cinema in general – is his time at Ealing studios, of which he was Head of Production from 1938 till 1955. It was here that he was able to put into practice his conviction that 'a film, to be international, must be thoroughly national in the first instance.' (p. 61.) He was able also to follow through a genuine studio policy and he records with evident pride that after *The Foreman Went to France* in 1941: 'Ealing never looked outside its own staff for directors. Every man who directed a film had received his initial training with me at other studios or at Ealing itself. This is another factor which gave Ealing films their particular style.' (p. 138.) Upon this secure basis was evolved an approach which owed something to the heritage of the British entertainment film, but much also to the influx of ideas and methods derived from the documentary movement. Balcon is generous in his appreciation of the contribution made by men like Alberto Cavalcanti: 'In the war, denuded as we were of so many of our people, I naturally turned to the documentary school of film-makers . . . and it was Cavalcanti's close association with me which provided

the force from which emerged what are now thought of *en bloc* – though their variety was considerable – as the Ealing films.’ (p. 131.) The immediate result was a number of war-time semi-documentaries which could have been the basis of a British neo-realist movement. Instead, with the end of the war, there came a turn towards comedy and away from the concern with reality which was producing *Rome, Open City* in Italy and *La Bataille du Rail* in France. The transition is recorded quite casually by Balcon as if it were a natural and inevitable change: ‘I suppose because we felt we were at the beginning of a new era after the war we were inclined to try out our talents on different sorts of films – things we had never done before. We decided, for instance, that it would be a good idea to make a series of ghost stories . . .’ (p. 157.) With these few words is recorded the death of the cinema of social awareness in Britain.

It is with evident pride that Balcon looks back on the Ealing comedies – he even allows himself the unwonted luxury of a comparison with Chaplin. He is surely right to see them as ‘basically good stories in their own right’ (p. 158) and to emphasize that ‘they were not, with the exception of *Whisky Galore*, stories taken from novels or plays. They started as ideas designed from the outset in screen terms.’ (p. 159.) The theory, or more properly formula of comedy which was adopted was quite simple: they ‘took a character – or a group of characters – and let him or them run up against an apparently insoluble problem, with the audience hoping that a way out would be found, which it usually was.’ (p. 158.) Given this approach the key figures were, as Balcon rightly says, the ‘men who could write in film comedy terms – T.E.B. Clarke, John Dighton, William Rose, Michael Pertwee, Robert Hamer and Henry Cornelius, the last two being writers as well as directors.’ (p. 159.) The role of the writer at Ealing – and in the British cinema as a whole – is a field that needs to be explored in depth.

More significant than the technique of laughter-making are the underlying attitudes inherent in the Ealing films. Balcon sees them as linked with real life: ‘The Ealing unconventional characters went about their daily tasks against a realistic background. The comedies reflected the country’s moods, social conditions and aspirations.’ (p. 158.) But there is more than a hint of paternalism in the way mood and reality are translated into undemanding comedy designed almost consciously to foster acquiescence in the status quo: ‘In the immediate post-war years there was as yet no mood of

cynicism; the bloodless revolution of 1945 had taken place, but I think our first desire was to get rid of as many wartime restrictions as possible and get going. The country was tired of regulations and regimentations and there was a mild anarchy in the air. In a sense our comedies were a reflection of this mood . . . *a safety valve for our more anti-social impulses.*' (p. 159, my italics.) The national awareness too is strong. Balcon's own suggested epitaph for Ealing studios was: 'Here during a quarter of a century many films were made projecting Britain and the British character.' (p. 185.) Elsewhere he considers and brushes aside criticism of the Ealing style as headmasterly and middleclass with the assertion that 'working this way certainly produced for a number of years those films which had some sense of national pride so often missing in the films of today.' (p. 138.)

Here, rather than in any primness with regard to sex or violence, are the crucial limitations of the Ealing style, which allow it to produce agreeable and entertaining works but prevent it ever embodying mature artistic statements. The films which truly reflect the state of a society – Renoir's *La Règle du Jeu* or De Sica's *Umberto D* – are never the good, wholesome products of the official view, but, rather, probing statements which provoke awkward and fundamental questions. Both these films derive much of their impact from the procedures of comedy but use such methods merely as a starting point for a more profound analysis. They were attacked when they first appeared by official spokesmen and censors who used the same vocabulary as Balcon, talked of a positive approach and of national values. Renoir saw *La Règle du Jeu* banned as 'demoralizing,' De Sica was accused of rendering 'a bad service to his country if people throughout the world start thinking that Italy in the middle of the twentieth century is the same as in *Umberto D*.' No-one attacked Ealing comedy in this way, for it fails to get beyond the level of the half-consciously fabricated national myth, the charming little oddity to be sold to the Americans alongside beafoaters and red double-decker buses. Balcon's is a name we associate with many of the most agreeable achievements in the British cinema. His autobiography, with its sober account of a lifetime's endeavour, shows only too clearly why the British cinema is so seldom more than amusing or entertaining, and so rarely totally enthrals us.

ROY ARMES

Select List of Books in Print:

Film History

compiled by Gillian Hartnoll

GENERAL

FIELDING, RAYMOND, *editor*

A Technological History of Motion Pictures and Television.

Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967.

Selection of articles from the *Journal of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers*. Its usefulness is very much reduced by the lack of an index.

HOUSTON, PENELOPE

The Contemporary Cinema. Penguin Books, 1963.

Good survey of post-war cinema, even though now rather out of date.

KNIGHT, ARTHUR

The Liveliest Art: A Panoramic History of the Movies.

New York, New American Library, 1959.

Readable potted history.

MACGOWAN, KENNETH

Behind the Screen: The History and Techniques of the Motion Picture. New York, Delacorte Press, 1965.

World history with a strong American bias. Valuable in combining art, economics and technique of the cinema.

NIVER, KEMP R.

Motion Pictures from the Library of Congress Paper Print Collection, 1894-1912. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967.

Not strictly speaking a history, but full of information about the early cinema.

O'LEARY, LIAM

The Silent Cinema. Studio Vista, 1965.

Particularly worthwhile for its well selected and numerous stills.

ROTHA, PAUL, and GRIFFITH, RICHARD

The Film Till Now: A Survey of World Cinema. 4th ed. Spring Books, 1967.

Gillian Hartnoll is
the librarian at the
British Film Institute

First published in 1930 so over half the book is devoted to the silent cinema. Apart from Richard Griffith's section for the 1949 edition, later years have been covered in a very summary way.

BY COUNTRY

Arab Countries

SADOUL, GEORGES, *editor*

The Cinema in the Arab Countries. Beirut, Interarab Centre of Cinema and Television, 1966.

Collection of papers given at various Round Tables on the Arab Cinema, together with a list of full-length films produced between 1927 and 1966.

Britain

GIFFORD, DENIS

British Cinema: An Illustrated Guide. Zwemmer, 1968.

Useful biographical dictionary.

LOW, RACHAEL

History of the British Film. Allen & Unwin, 1948—

Vol. 1, 1896–1906, is out of print. Vols. 2 and 3, 1906–1914 and 1914–1918, are in print. Vol. 4 is to be published shortly.

MANVELL, ROGER

New Cinema in Britain. Studio Vista, 1969.

Emphasis is on illustrations.

OAKLEY, CHARLES

Where We Came In: Seventy Years of the British Film Industry. Allen & Unwin, 1964.

A not too reliable survey.

Czechoslovakia

DEWEY, LANG

An Index to Czechoslovak Directors. Federation of Film Societies 1969.

Small but useful pamphlet.

ZVONIČEK, STANISLAV, *editor*

Modern Czechoslovak Film, 1945–1965. Prague, Artia, 1965. Well illustrated and documented survey. This may be out of print. Later this year Zwemmer will be publishing *Eastern Europe: An Illustrated Guide* by Nina Hibbin.

France

ARMES, ROY

French Cinema Since 1946. Zwemmer, 1966. 2 vols.

Useful and well documented survey. Revised edition in preparation.

Germany

KRACAUER, SIEGFRIED

From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film. Oxford University Press, 1966.

First published in 1947, it remains an important study of German cinema between the two World Wars. It will be joined later this year by *The Haunted Screen* (Thames & Hudson), a translation of Lotte Eisner's excellent *l'Ecran Démoniaque*.

Hungary

NEMESKURTY, ISTVAN

Word and Image: History of the Hungarian Cinema. Clematis Press, 1968.

A good up-to-date history.

India

BARNOUW, ERIC, and KRISHNASWARMY, S.

Indian Film. Columbia University Press, 1963.

Covers all aspects of the Indian cinema.

Italy

RONDI, GIAN LUIGI

Italian Cinema Today, 1952-1965. Dennis Dobson, 1967. A poor translation not really compensated for by lavish illustrations. Unfortunately there is nothing else available in English and in print.

Japan

ANDERSON, JOSEPH, and RICHIE, DONALD

The Japanese Film: Art and Industry. New York, Grove Press, 1960.

A standard work on the history of the Japanese cinema.

RICHIE, DONALD

The Japanese Cinema: an Illustrated History. Ward Lock, 1966. Useful survey.

Poland

BANASKIEWICZ, WLADYSLAW, and others

Contemporary Polish cinematography. Warsaw, Polonia Publishing House, 1962.

Its usefulness is diminished by the lack of an index. Very possibly out of print, but no alternative volume has appeared, although a new edition has been projected.

Soviet Union

LEYDA, JAY

Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film. Allen & Unwin, 1960.

The standard work on the subject.

Sweden

COWIE, PETER

Swedish Cinema. Zwemmer, 1966.

Useful historical survey. A new edition is in preparation and as *Sweden 2* will form part of a two-volume work, the other volume to be a reference book entitled *Sweden 1: An Illustrated Guide*.

United States of America

BALSHOFER, FRED J., and MILLER, ARTHUR

One Reel a Week. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967. Fascinating account by two Hollywood veterans, with particular reference to the silent and pre-Hollywood periods.

BAXTER, JOHN

Hollywood in the Thirties. Zwemmer, 1968.

One of an invaluable trilogy. Other titles are *Hollywood in the Twenties* by David Robinson and *Hollywood in the Forties* by Charles Higham and Joel Greenberg.

BROWNLOW, KEVIN

The Parade's Gone By. Secker & Warburg, 1969.

A loving evocation of the silent days, mainly through interviews and a marvellous collection of photographs.

BLUM, DANIEL

A Pictorial History of the Silent Screen. Spring Books, 1963.

BLUM, DANIEL

A Pictorial History of the Talkies. New ed., revised by John Kobal. Spring Books, 1968.

Additional material in the new edition is international, not just American, in scope.

FRANKLIN, JOE

Classics of the Silent Screen: A Pictorial Treasury. New York, Citadel Press, 1959.

A chronological survey of the major films, with articles on 75 of the leading actors and actresses. Attractively illustrated.

FRENCH, PHILIP

The Movie Moguls: An Informal History of the Hollywood Tycoons. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969.

A fascinating account of the larger-than-life studio bosses who were responsible for so much of the American cinema.

HENDRICKS, GORDON

The Edison Motion Picture Myth. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1961.

The first of a series of scholarly investigations on the beginning of cinema in America. Two subsequent volumes, both published by 'The Beginnings of the American Film' are entitled *The Beginnings of the Biograph* and *The Kinetoscope*.

JACOBS, LEWIS

The Rise of the American Film: A Critical History. Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1968.

A classic history first published in 1939 and recently reissued, but unhappily without revision.

MAYERSBERG, PAUL

Hollywood: The Haunted House. Penguin Books, 1969.

A disappointingly slight book, but containing some interesting material.

RAMSAYE, TERRY

A Million and One Nights: A History of the Motion Pictures. Frank Cass, 1964.

A reprint of the famous 1927 volumes.

RENAN, SHELDON

The Underground Film: An Introduction to its Development in America. Studio Vista, 1968.

Comprehensive survey and reference book.

SARRIS, ANDREW

The American Cinema: Directors and Directions, 1929-1968. New York, Dutton, 1969.

Outline filmographies and critical, usually rather brief, evaluations of American directors, with a chronology and full index of films.

WAGENKNECHT, EDWARD

The Movies in the Age of Innocence. University of Oklahoma, 1962.

An attractive account of early Hollywood.

Note: Place of publication has not been given for the English books. Where there is more than one publisher or edition, only the English publisher and the latest edition is given. Unless otherwise stated, all the books were believed to be in print when the list was compiled.